

DUBLIN

under
the Georges



Constantia
Maxwell

D U B L I N
U N D E R T H E
G E O R G E S
1714-1830

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Dublin Under the Georges

by the same author

★

COUNTRY AND TOWN IN IRELAND
UNDER THE GEORGES
etc.

DUBLIN
UNDER THE GEORGES
1714—1830

BY
CONSTANTIA MAXWELL

FORMERLY LECKY PROFESSOR OF MODERN HISTORY
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Dublin, the second city in the British Empire, though it yields in extent, yields not in architectural beauty to the metropolis of England. For some years previous to the Union, its progress was excessive—the locality of the Parliament—the residence of the nobility and commons—the magnificence of the Viceregal court—the active hospitality of the people—and the increasing commerce of the Port—all together gave a brilliant prosperity to that splendid and luxurious capital.

SIR JONAH BARRINGTON, *Historic Memoirs of Ireland* (1835), vol. i, p. 7

My picture of Ireland should be *mulier formosa superne*—a woman exquisitely beautiful, with her head and neck richly attired, her bosom full, but meanly dressed, her lower parts lean and emaciated, half-covered with tattered weeds, her legs and feet bare, with burned shins, and all the squalor of indigent sloth.

REV. THOMAS CAMPBELL, *A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland* (1777), p. 138

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Preface

Dublin under the Georges was larger than any English provincial town of the period and was an important place. It was the political capital of Ireland, had a considerable population, a growing trade, some flourishing industries, and an active and even brilliant social life. In many respects it resembled London of which it was a small copy, but of course it was a colonial capital for this was the age of the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland.

The modern visitor is impressed with the spaciousness of the city and the ordered lay-out of its streets so characteristically Georgian. He also admires the two great classical buildings which adorn the banks of the river as it flows in a graceful curve on its way to the sea. Georgian Dublin is fast disappearing owing to the fact that much of it has degenerated into tenements, but many fine streets, large squares and handsome houses remain. There is much classical architecture to appreciate, and many fine interiors, for the Anglo-Irish nobility and gentry who attended the Parliament had their town houses which they decorated with care in accordance with the taste of the day.

The stranger should go the National Museum in Kildare Street if he wishes to inspect the fine specimens of silver, glass, furniture, etc., produced in the Dublin of the period, and also to the new Civic Museum in South William Street which contains pictures and prints and many relics of old Dublin life. The building in which this museum is housed was originally built in 1766 by the Society of Artists for the exhibition of pictures, but was used as The City Hall from 1791 to 1852 when The Royal Exchange on Cork Hill became the civic centre. Now, under the joint control of the Corporation and The Old Dublin Society it has been beauti-

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fully restored, the Octagonal Room in particular bearing living witness to the taste of the eighteenth century.

For long the Protestant Ascendancy (although undermined by the Union and the social legislation of the nineteenth century) has been in bad odour in Ireland, but its cultural heritage is now at last being valued, and will, one sincerely hopes, soon become completely absorbed in the national tradition.

This book is written frankly from the standpoint of an admirer of the Age of Reason, and in defence of the Anglo-Irish gentry who stood for the culture of the eighteenth century in Ireland. The writer is naturally aware of the deplorable fact that the civilization of the rich during this period in Ireland as elsewhere was built up on the poverty of the masses. Colonial predominance was another misfortune, but it is hard to see how Anglo-Irish and native interests could have been satisfactorily adjusted in the particular circumstances of the day. There were healthy political, social and economic forces at work in Georgian Ireland, however, which might have combined to produce a united, prosperous and contented nation, had it not been that these were thwarted or destroyed by the policy adopted at the Union.

It is possible that some of my Irish readers will complain that the lack of sanitation, the frequency of epidemics and other disagreeable features of eighteenth-century Dublin have been unduly emphasized in the present volume. Descriptions of town life during the Age of the Georges as given in such works as Mrs. M. D. George's *London Life in the Eighteenth Century* and Professor W. E. Mead's *The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* should, however, convince such readers of the fact that Dublin was neither better nor worse in these respects than most of the other great cities of the period.

This book was first published in 1936, and reprinted subsequently several times. A new edition appeared in 1946, to which I added a series of notes. In the present edition the text has been revised and brought up to date, and further and fuller notes have been added.

I am glad to take this opportunity of again thanking all those who have been so kind as to help me in writing this

Preface

book, whether by lending books and prints, by giving permission to view buildings or institutions under their charge, or by making useful suggestions of one kind or another. I wish to express my particular thanks to the staff of the National Library, Dublin, and to the library assistants of the Royal Irish Academy, all of whom are unfailingly generous to scholars, however much they may encroach upon their time or try their patience.

CONSTANTIA MAXWELL

Dublin, 1956

CHAPTER I

The Course of Events

There is a Vein of Industry and Parsimony, that runs through the whole people of England; which, added to the Easiness of their Rents, makes them rich and sturdy. As to Ireland, they know little more than they do of Mexico; further than it is a Country subject to the King of England, full of Boggs, inhabited by wild Irish Papists; who are kept in Awe by mercenary Troops sent from thence: And their general Opinion is, that it were better for England if this whole Island were sunk into the Sea: For, they have a Tradition, that every Forty Years there must be a Rebellion in Ireland.

JONATHAN SWIFT, *The Drapier's Letters to the People of Ireland* (1724), edited by Herbert Davis (1935), p. 128

Englishmen are disposed to measure everything by the standard of their own country, than which nothing can be more fallacious when applied to Ireland. I really believe that, in many respects, the inhabitants of no two countries on the face of the globe are so essentially different.

Lord Darnley's speech on the Union (1799), in
Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. xxxiv, p. 689

The Battle of the Boyne, fought on 12th July 1690, was a decisive event in Irish history. When the day was lost by those Irish Catholics who had taken up the Jacobite cause an opportunity was missed of founding an Irish nation. After the war the best lands of the vanquished were confiscated, and they had no alternative but to seek their fortunes abroad or to exist in poverty in their own country. English settlers took over their property and became the real rulers of Ireland. Although backed up by their own Government, and akin to that large body of Protestants already planted as a result of successive confiscations, the new landlords took stock of their unfamiliar surroundings with a certain amount of anxiety. They felt that they had little in

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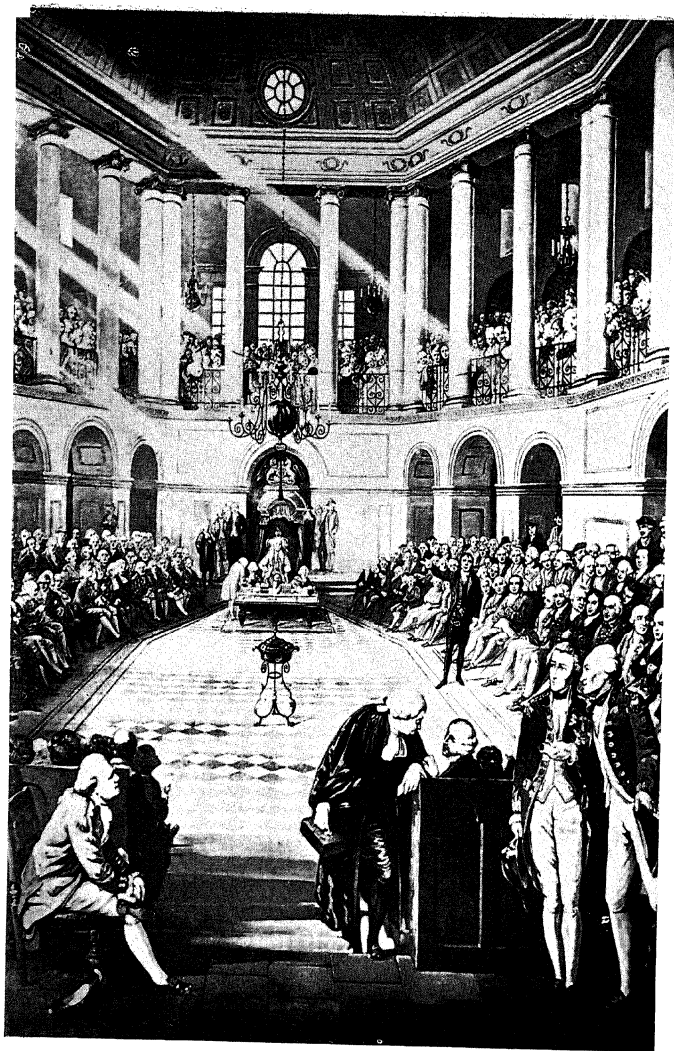
common with the people among whom they found themselves, and knew that they had to reckon with their hostility.

The Irish had consistently opposed the intrusion of English invaders since the days of the Anglo-Normans. They had never missed an opportunity for rebellion, nor resisted the temptation of calling in a foreign Power. They had clung to their Catholic faith despite all efforts to convert them, and they had never really submitted themselves to English law. After the Elizabethan conquest, when the north was planted with colonists, and English institutions had been introduced, the country might reasonably have been regarded as finally subdued. 'Ireland', wrote Bacon, 'is the last of the daughters of Europe which hath been reclaimed from desolation and a desert (in many parts) to population and plantation; and from savage and barbarous customs to humanity and civility.' And Sir John Davies, who had long considered the Celtic problem, pronounced 'the strings of this Irish Harp' to be at last 'in tune'. That this was far from being the case was soon proved, however, by the terrible rebellion that broke out in 1641, and by the bitter campaigns of Cromwell.

When the Williamite army had finally reconquered Ireland England determined to attach her troublesome neighbour more firmly to herself. The link was to be forged by her own colonists. In order to make their position secure a penal code of unparalleled severity was imposed on the rest of the population. No Irish Roman Catholic was to take part in the life of the State. He was excluded both from voting and from taking a seat in Parliament. He might not aspire to either the Bar or the Bench, act as sheriff, or hold any office under the Crown. No Catholic might buy land, inherit it, or receive it as a gift from a Protestant. No lease might be held for more than thirty-one years, or on such terms that the profits exceeded one-third of the rent. On a man's death his estate was divided among his sons, but if the eldest became a Protestant the whole was settled on him. All priests and bishops who refused to take the Oath of Allegiance were ordered to leave the country. Only registered priests might celebrate Mass; all others were subject to the penalties of high treason. Roman Catholics were forbidden to teach in a school or to enter the university. They might not even send their children to



ORNAMENTAL CHIMNEY (ONE OF A PAIR) ON THE ROOF
OF THE CASINO BUILT BY LORD CHARLEMONT AT
CLONTARF, NEAR DUBLIN



THE IRISH HOUSE OF COMMONS, 1790

From the painting by Henry Barraud and John Hayter in the collection of
Sir William Whitla, M.D.

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be educated abroad. The main object of these laws, apart from their religious and political aspect, was to keep the Irish poor and ignorant. They must never be allowed to regain the lands which had passed into the hands of the Protestant gentry. They must never be able to challenge the foundations of the power of the Ascendancy. It was hoped that as time went on the national ideals would fade, the Catholic faith be silently abandoned, the people lose their racial antipathies, submit themselves to their masters, and become reconciled to English rule.

This abominable code, which is said to have been modelled on the laws against the Huguenots, was put into force during the first half of the Georgian period in Ireland.¹ But with the coming of the Age of Reason there were many who condemned it—and not only on moral grounds, but from the point of view of statesmanship. ‘The Irish are in a most unnatural state,’ declared Dr. Johnson in a generous burst of enthusiasm, ‘for we see there the minority prevailing over the majority. There is no instance, even in the Ten Persecutions, of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics.’ And Arthur Young, the English agriculturist, whose sympathies were always on the side of the underdog, but who was at the same time eminently practical, pointed out that ‘an aristocracy of five hundred thousand Protestants’ crushing ‘the industry of two millions of poor Catholics’ could ‘never advance the public interest’.

The Penal Laws had certainly kept the country free from rebellion and war, but they had served no other useful purpose. The most enterprising of the Irish gradually left the

¹ For the provisions of the Penal Code see Lecky's *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (ed. 1892), Vol. I, pp. 136–69.

The picture of the Irish House of Commons reproduced opposite which shows Curran addressing the House in an attempt to reconstruct the Irish Parliament of 1790, is misleading in several details, such as the pavement and central candelabra, which really belonged to the new House built after the fire of 27th February 1792. See *A Short History of the Irish Parliament House* (now the Bank of Ireland), by H. O. Brunskill (1934), and the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. xxxvii (1907), p. 55. (Note by E. MacDowel Cosgrave.) See footnote, p. 60.

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country to serve in foreign wars or to settle in America, and those who remained, without property or scope for their activities, gradually sank into poverty and ignorance. 'There is not an acre of land in Ireland turned to half its advantage,' wrote Swift in 1732, 'yet it is better improved than the people.' 'Whoever travels this country and observes the face of nature, or the faces and habits and dwellings of the natives,' he had remarked a little earlier, 'will hardly think himself in a land where law, religion, or common humanity is professed.'

But the backward state of Irish agriculture and the poverty of the Catholic masses were not due entirely to the Penal Laws. The pernicious land system that arose out of the confiscations was partly to blame. Very few of the peasants had any land of their own. They lived as tenants with very small holdings on the estates of their landlords. The rents were high, and in addition they had to pay tithes to the Protestant Church and dues to their own priests. Only short leases were granted, and when these came to an end the lands were put up to the highest bidder. The cottier had no means by which he could improve his position. He could, in fact, just manage to exist. When the potato, the main staple of his diet, failed, he was reduced to starvation, for there was no Poor Law as in England to come to his aid. No wonder that his food and clothing were poor, that he lived in a house little better than a pigsty, that his crops were scanty and bad, that his fences were falling down, or that the roads were full of beggars and thieves. English visitors were variously affected by what they saw in Ireland. Mrs. Delany tells us that the poverty of the peasants made her heart ache,¹ while the impression produced on the mind of Thomas Day, who travelled through the midlands in 1768, was chiefly one of disgust. His friend Mr. Edgeworth, who was with him, records that the author of *Sandford and Merton* was so deeply depressed by the black tracts of bog and the hovels of the people that, although he was an ardent disciple of Rousseau, his Irish experiences on this occasion almost uprooted his 'deep-seated prejudice in favour of savage life'.

Bishop Berkeley inquired ironically in his *Querist* 'whether

¹ Letter written by Mrs. Delany to her sister on her way to Killala, 12th June 1732.

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there be on earth any Christian or civilized people so beggarly, wretched, and destitute as the common Irish?' An attempt will be made later to describe the life of the poor in Dublin. As it was from the peasant, however, that the gentry derived most of their wealth the following account (taken from a little paper called *The Reformer*, which was founded by Burke shortly before he left Ireland in 1750) is not without interest:

'Whoever travels through this Kingdom will see such Poverty as few Nations in Europe can equal. In this City [Dublin] Things have the best Face; but still, as you leave the Town, the Scene grows worse, and presents you with the utmost Penury in the Midst of a rich Soil. Nothing perhaps shews it more clearly, than that though the People have but one small tax of Two Shillings a Year [hearth money], yet when the Collector comes, for Default of Payment he is obliged to carry off such of their poor Utensils, as their being forced to use denotes the utmost Misery; these he keeps, until by begging, or other Shifts more hard, they can redeem them. Indeed, Money is a Stranger to them; and were they as near the Golden Age in some other Respects, as they are in this, they would be the happiest People in the World. As for their Food, it is notorious they seldom taste Bread or Meat; their Diet in Summer is Potatoes and sour Milk; in Winter, when something is required comfortable, they are still worse, living on the same Root, made palatable only by a little Salt, and accompanied with Water: Their Cloathes so ragged, that they rather publish than conceal the Wretchedness it was meant to hide; nay, it is no uncommon Sight to see half-a-dozen Children run quite naked out of a Cabin, scarcely distinguishable from a Dunghill, to the great disgrace of our Country with Foreigners, who would doubtless report them Savages, imputing that to choice which only proceeds from their irremediable Poverty. Let anyone take a Survey of their cabins, and then say whether such a Residence be worthy anything that challenges the Title of a human Creature. You enter, or rather creep in, at a Door of Hurdles plaistered with Dirt, of which the Inhabitant is generally the Fabricator; within-side you see (if the Smoke will permit you) the Men, Women, Children, Dogs and Swine, lying

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promiscuously; for their Opulence is such that they cannot have a separate House for their Cattle, as it would take too much from the Garden, whose produce is their only Support. Their Furniture is much fitter to be lamented than described, such as a Pot, a Stool, a few wooden Vessels, and a broken Bottle: In this manner all the Peasantry, to a Man, live: and I Appeal to anyone, who knows the Country, for the Justness of the Picture. . . . I fancy [adds the writer] many of our fine Gentlemen's Pageantry would be greatly tarnished, were their gilt coaches to be preceded and followed by the miserable Wretches, whose Labour supports them.¹

As for the country gentry, there were a great many varieties, from the absentees who spent most of their time in England, managing their estates through rack-renting middlemen, to the 'improving' landlords.² In a list of absentees which was published in Dublin and London in 1730 the yearly value of the income spent by Irish absentees abroad was estimated at £621,499. A similar list published in 1769 gives the figure as £1,208,982.³ The removal of such a large sum which ought to have been spent in the country was undoubtedly one of the chief causes of Irish poverty. The explanation of the evil is not hard to find. A great deal of Irish land had passed into the hands of Englishmen who already had estates in England, which they never ceased to regard as their true country, while others definitely preferred English surroundings and English ways. Bishop Berkeley inquires 'whether a gentleman who hath seen a little of the World, and observed how men lived elsewhere, can contentedly sit down in a cold, damp, sordid habitation, in the midst of a bleak country, inhabited by thieves and beggars?' If some of the Irish gentry preferred London or Bath to their estates in Ireland this can hardly (as Berkeley implies) be wondered at. As for the 'improving' landlord, the

¹ See the chapter on 'The Peasantry' in my *Country and Town in Ireland under the Georges* (1940).

² See the chapters on 'The Social Life of the Gentry' and 'The Landlords and Agriculture' in my *Country and Town in Ireland under the Georges*.

³ Swift, in his seventh *Drapier Letter*, asserted that one-third of the Irish rents were spent in England.

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Dublin Society was founded in 1731 chiefly by members of the landlord class for the 'improvement of husbandry and other useful arts', and a great deal was done through its efforts to advance agriculture. Arthur Young in his tour through the country in 1776-7 met many persons who had introduced new methods of farming and cattle-breeding from England, drained bogs, planted trees, and encouraged tenants in various ways to take an interest in their holdings. He did not meet Richard Lovell Edgeworth, as this gentleman did not settle on his Irish estate until 1782. He was one of the most enlightened landlords of the time, as we can see by reading the *Memoirs* published by his daughter in 1819.

The fact that landlords had gained their property, not, as Lecky puts it, from the 'accumulated savings of industrious ancestors', but by 'confiscation', and that they ruled over a population in a condition of 'virtual slavery', without civil rights and in abject poverty, gave them a feeling of insecurity and irresponsibility that was reflected in their manners. Arthur Young was horrified by the frequency with which canes and horsewhips were used to punish disobedient or disrespectful subordinates, and remarks that 'knocking-down' was spoken of in the country in a way that made 'an Englishman stare'. With this tyrannous behaviour, specially noticeable among the lesser gentry and middlemen¹ (a reckless and dissipated class unknown in England), went a passion for gambling, horse-racing, hunting, cock-fighting, and duelling. These pursuits left little time or inclination for gardening, reading, or polite conversation. The tastes of the gentry, as reflected in their houses and general way of life, have been described for us by a host of writers from Mrs. Delany to the German Prince Pückler-Muskau,² who visited

¹ Arthur Young in his *Tour in Ireland* (1780) gave a vivid picture of the Irish middleman and land agent.

² Prince Hermann Ludwig Heinrich Pückler-Muskau (1785-1871), a wealthy German baron, and the father of landscape gardening in Germany, travelled extensively in Europe and America. His *Briefe eines Verstorbenen* (4 vols., 1830-1), one of his books of travel, was translated by Sarah Austin, and published in two volumes, under the title of *A Tour in England, Ireland and France in the years 1828 and 1829 with Remarks on the Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants in 1832*.

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Ireland under George IV.¹ Cleanliness was not always a conspicuous feature, furniture was apt to be dilapidated, doors creaked, windows let in rain, while barefooted menservants in splendid but tarnished liveries attended on wondering guests.

When Arthur Young was travelling through the country he met people of all descriptions and heard many tales. He writes in his *Autobiography*:

‘At Lord Longford’s I met a person of some celebrity at the time for adventures not worth reciting, Mr. Medlicott. Lord Longford and he gave me an account of a gentleman of a good estate in that neighbourhood, but then dead, whose real life, manners and conversation far exceeded anything to be met with in *Castle Rackrent*. His hospitality was unbounded, and it never for a moment came into his head to make any provision for feeding the people he brought into his house. While credit was to be had, his butler or house-keeper did this for him; his own attention was given solely to the cellar that wine might not be wanted. If claret was secured, with a dead ox or sheep hanging in the slaughter-house ready for steaks or cutlets, he thought all was well. He was never easy without company in the house, and with a large party in it would invite another of twice the number. One day the cook came into the breakfast parlour before all the company: “Sir, there’s no coals.”—“Then burn turf.” “Sir, there’s no turf.”—“Then cut down a tree.” This was a forlorn hope, for in all probability he must have gone three miles to find one, all round the house being long ago safely swept away. They dispatched a number of cars to borrow turf. Candles were equally deficient, for unfortunately he was fond of dogs all half starved, so that a gentleman walking to what was called his bedchamber, after making two or three turnings, met a hungry greyhound, who, jumping up, took the candle out of the candlestick, and devoured it in a trice, and left him in the dark. To advance or return was equally a matter of chance, therefore groping his way, he soon found himself in the midst of a parcel of giggling maidservants. By

¹ Lady Morgan’s novels—e.g., *The O’Briens and the O’Flaherties* (1827), and *Florence M’Carthy* (1818)—give pictures of Irish society immediately before and after the Union.

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what means he at last found his way to his "shakedown" is unknown. A "shakedown", when I was in Ireland, meant some clean straw spread upon the floor, with blankets and sheets, in what was called the barrackroom, one containing several beds for single men.'

'At Mr. Richard Aldworth's, in the County of Cork, I met with an instance, both in that gentleman and lady, of elegant manners and cultivated minds. He had made the Grand Tour, and she had been educated in that style which may be imagined in a person nearly related to a Lord Chief Justice and an Archbishop. But it was evident that patriotic motives alone made them residents in Ireland. A sigh would often escape when circumstances of English manners were named, and they felt the dismal vacuity of living in a country where people of equal ideas were scarce. Mrs. Aldworth had in her possession one original manuscript letter of Dean Swift, entrusted to her under a solemn promise that she would permit no copy to be taken, nor ever read it twice to the same people. It was without exception the wittiest and severest satire upon Ireland that probably ever was written, and it was easy to perceive by the manner in which it was read that the sentiments were not a little in unison with those of the reader. . . .

From various other instances as well as from this I was inclined to think that that degree of a polished and cultivated education, which suits well enough for London or Paris, or a country residence in a good neighbourhood of England, was ill-framed for a province in Ireland.'

Young was hospitably received wherever he went in Ireland, and in his *Tour*, published in 1780, makes graceful acknowledgments. Those who missed English order and elegance in Irish country houses found other things which gave them a great deal of pleasure. They delighted in the happy, care-free atmosphere in which they found themselves, the facilities for sport, the abundance of good cheer, the extraordinary kindness and generous hospitality of their hosts.

The Irish gentry were long in losing the distinctive character acquired through comparative isolation in a primitive country. De Quincey, who paid a series of visits in Ireland at the time of the Union. notices in his 'Autobiographic Sketches'

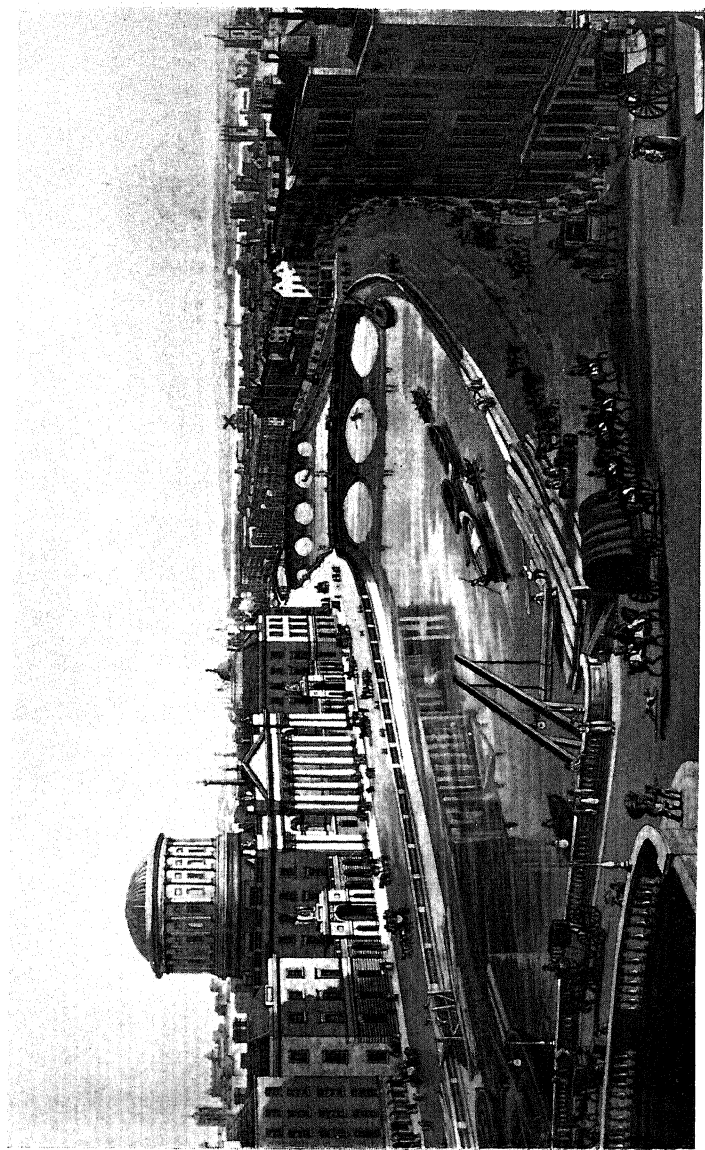
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how in the 'midst of hospitality the most unbounded, and the amplest comfort', many of his hosts were 'conspicuously in the rear of the English commercial gentry, as to modern refinements of luxury'. But his imagination was stirred by the huge, rambling houses, with their long galleries and innumerable windows, 'old libraries, old butlers, and old customs' that seemed to belong more to the time of Cromwell than to the opening years of the nineteenth century. Nor was he less impressed by the 'raciness of manner' and 'apparent strength of character' of their owners, which he presumes to have been formed 'amidst turbulent scenes'.

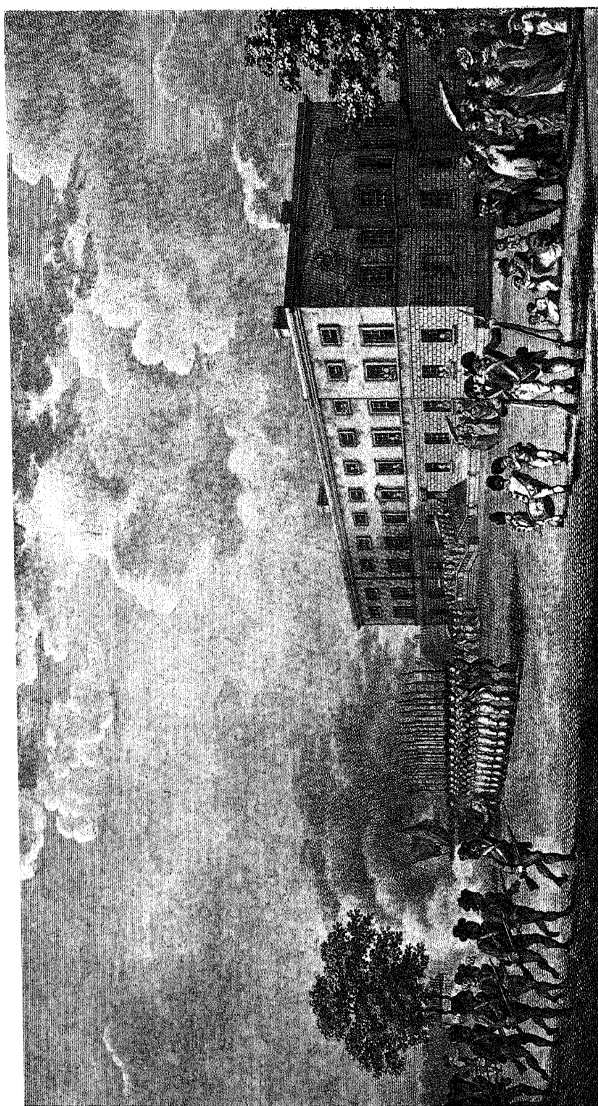
The gentry in Ireland in the eighteenth century had an agreeable existence on the whole, but the 'turbulent scenes' referred to by De Quincey were not wanting. 'Misery', wrote Lord Charlemont in 1760, 'is ever restless, and the man who is destitute both of enjoyment and hope can never be a good or quiet subject.' In the early part of the century the country had been afflicted by roving bands of peasants known as Tories and Rapparees, while from 1760 onward the secret society whose members were known as Whiteboys flourished among the tenantry.¹ Maddened by high rents and tithes, evictions caused by enclosures, land-jobbing, low wages, and want of employment, they often succeeded in terrorizing the country. They destroyed a great deal of property, and committed numerous outrages. Houses were robbed or burned, farmers were intimidated, fences were torn down, orchards were rooted up, and cattle houghed or slaughtered. Arthur Young writes in his *Tour in Ireland*:

'It was a common practice with them to go in parties about the country, swearing many to be true to them, and forcing them to join by menaces, which they very often carried into execution. At last they set up to be general redressers of grievances, punished all obnoxious persons who advanced the value of lands, or hired farms over their heads; and, having taken the administration of justice into their hands, were not very exact in the distribution of it. Forced masters to release their apprentices, carried off the daughters of rich

¹ There is a good account of the Whiteboys in Sir George Cornewall Lewis's *Local Disturbances in Ireland* (1836).



VIEW OF DUBLIN FROM NEAR THE FOUR COURTS AFTER T.S. ROBERTS (1760-1826)



LEINSTER HOUSE IN DUBLIN

From Thomas Milton's *Views of Seats in Ireland* (1783-93)

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farmers, ravished them into marriages, of which four instances happened in a fortnight. They levied sums of money on the middling and lower farmers, in order to support their cause, by paying attornies, etc., in defending prosecutions against them, and many of them subsisted for some years without work, supported by these contributions. Sometimes they committed several considerable robberies, breaking into houses and taking the money, under pretence of redressing grievances. In the course of these outrages they burnt several houses and destroyed the whole substance of men obnoxious to them. The barbarities they committed were shocking. One of their usual punishments (and by no means the most severe) was taking people out of their beds, carrying them naked in winter, on horseback, for some distance, and burying them up to the chin in a hole filled with briars, not forgetting to cut off one of their ears. . . . The gentlemen of the country had frequent expeditions to discover them in arms, but their intelligence was so uncommonly good by their influence over the common people, that not one party that ever went out in quest of them was successful.'

In some parts of the country the gentlemen described by Young were actually forced to barricade their houses. Lower windows were sometimes built up with stone and mortar. The doors were often closed with massive wooden bolts. Firearms were provided in bedrooms, and during meals pistols lay handy on dining-room sideboards. Whiteboyism lasted only for a time, but agrarian crime of some sort or other seems to have been chronic.

The Protestant landlords, greatly outnumbered by their enemies, naturally turned to their kinsmen in England for encouragement and support. But what Swift calls 'the love and torrent of power' had so infected the mother country that the English Government thought more of submitting Ireland to the Mercantile System than of weighing matters of sentiment. Protestants and Catholics alike had to pay the price then demanded by all empires of their colonies—complete subordination in economic matters.¹ As early as the

¹ See George O'Brien's *Economic History of Ireland in the Seventeenth Century* (1919), and his *Economic History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (1918).

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Restoration the flourishing state of the Irish cattle trade had caused anxiety to cross-Channel farmers, and so great was the agitation on the part of the English agricultural community that two Acts were passed (in 1663 and 1666 respectively) prohibiting all imports of cattle into England. In 1698-9 the Irish woollen trade was similarly attacked. Woollens were being exported in large quantities from Ireland to the Continent, and as the cost of production was low English manufacturers feared that they would be outsold in foreign markets. They petitioned their Government against the Irish trade, with the result that two Acts were passed prohibiting export. Thus the staple industry of England was secured, but the Irish woollen manufacture was ruined. Ireland was deprived of part of her colonial trade by the Navigation Acts, and her minor industries, such as that of glass-making, were restricted by heavy duties on import into England. At the same time English goods were admitted into Ireland on a very low scale of duties, in order that British manufacturers might secure a good market. These severe measures were part of the same commercial system that put the English colonists in America in ill-humour, and caused them ultimately to revolt; but while the New World was separated from the Old by many miles of ocean, Ireland lay right at England's door, nor had she any effective means of self-protection.

By an Act passed in the reign of George I it was laid down that the English Parliament had a full right to legislate for Ireland, while by the notorious Poynings' Law that dated from Henry VII's reign the Irish Parliament could make no laws for Ireland without the sanction of the King and his Council in England. Roman Catholic opinion was excluded from the Irish Parliament, but so in fact was that of the bulk of the Protestants. Of the three hundred members of the Irish House of Commons only about a fifth can be said to have been under popular control. The rest were elected by boroughs controlled by the Crown, or through a few individual patrons. These did not form an independent body of opinion either, for they were bribed by places and pensions to support the Government measures. The country was thus ruled by a small minority who were responsible to none save

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the English Ministry. 'The greatest of all evils in politics', wrote Lecky, 'is power without control, and this evil never acquired more fearful dimensions than in Ireland in the early years of the eighteenth century.'

The English colonists in Ireland (or the Anglo-Irish, as they may now be called), apart from the faction acting in Government interest, accepted the political and economic situation forced upon them on account of their weakness. But they regarded their disagreeable position with ever-growing disgust. They were not Irish, and yet they were treated as foreigners. They made what protest they could in defence of their own interests, and when they gradually discovered that these were bound up with those of the country at large they developed an Irish sentiment. The first serious attack on English despotism was made by William Molyneux in his book *The Case of Ireland's being bound by Acts of Parliament in England stated* (1698). In this he pointed out that the English colonists in Ireland had been by tyrannical encroachments robbed of their political liberty to which they had as much right as Englishmen. Molyneux was no agitator; he wrote with moderation and restraint. He was an eminent philosopher (a friend of Locke), a man whose views should have been respected, yet his book was condemned by the English Parliament and ordered to be burned by the common hangman. Swift struck a louder, as well as a more forceful note on account of his effective attacks on behalf of economic interests. His brilliant satire fired the imagination of the people, and when he informed them that 'by the laws of God, of Nature, of Nations, and of your own Country, you are and ought to be as free a people as your brethren in England', he touched them to the quick and stirred their passions.¹

There were many able and public-spirited members of the Ascendancy class who followed in the footsteps of Molyneux and Swift, and wrote on political and economic questions during the course of the eighteenth century. Sir James Caldwell, Sheriff for County Fermanagh, published an *Inquiry concerning the Restrictions on the Trade of Ireland*. Hely-Hutch-

¹ Swift's reputation in Ireland rested rather on his zealous championship of Irish interests than on his eminence as a man of letters.

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inson, the Provost of Trinity College, also advocated Free Trade in his *Commercial Restraints of Ireland*, written in 1779. Dr. Samuel Madden, in *Reflections and Resolutions Proper for the Gentlemen of Ireland* (1738), set up new standards for the landlord class,¹ while Bishop Berkeley, in *The Querist* (1735-37), provided the whole country with an economic programme. The debates of the Irish Parliament also show the awakening of public spirit. A Patriotic party was gradually formed in the Irish House of Commons in opposition to the Government. The procedure with regard to money Bills, the control of the surplus, the granting of pensions out of Irish revenues to unsuitable persons in England, the duration of Parliament, the augmentation of the Irish army for imperial purposes—these were questions that were hotly debated in the course of the eighteenth century.

In his *Short View of the State of Ireland*, published in 1727, Swift wrote:

‘I would be glad to know by what secret method it is that we grow a Rich and flourishing People, without Liberty, Trade, Manufactures, Inhabitants, Money, or the privilege of Coining; without Industry, Labour or Improvement of Lands, and with more than half of the Rent and Profits of the whole Kingdom annually exported, for which we receive not a single Farthing. And to make up [for] all this, nothing worth mentioning, except the Linnen of the North, a Trade casual, corrupted and at Mercy, and some Butter from Cork. If we do flourish, it must be against every Law of Nature and Reason, like the Thorn at Glastonbury, that blossoms in the midst of Winter.’

But by the time of the American war economic conditions

¹ Dr. Samuel Madden (1686-1765), of whom Dr. Johnson said that ‘his was a name that Ireland ought to honour’, invented a scheme for promoting learning at Trinity College, Dublin, by which premiums were granted to those graduates who answered best at the quarterly examinations, and he also gave premiums out of his own pocket for useful inventions in industry, agriculture, and art under the auspices of the Dublin Society (see p. 206) of which he was one of the first patrons. He had a fine house on Lough Erne, and was an ‘improving’ landlord. In his *Reflections* (he set forth his view that luxury should be restrained, manufactures established, and instruction given to the peasantry in farming.

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in Ireland were different. The Irish cattle and woollen trades had been destroyed, it is true, by English restrictions, but Irish commerce as a whole was in a flourishing condition. An extensive provision trade had come into existence, large quantities of beef, butter, hides, and tallow being sent by Irish merchants not only to England and the Continent, but to the English colonies in America. The linen trade, which had escaped the jealous attentions of English manufacturers, had also become extremely prosperous. Arthur Young remarks in his *Tour* that since 1748 Ireland had perhaps made greater advances than any other country in Europe. Her linen exports he declares to have trebled, her general exports to Great Britain more than doubled. He noted the gradual improvement of Irish towns during the same period—'a strong mark,' as he truly observes, 'of rising prosperity'.

This 'rising prosperity' was unfortunately nipped in the bud by the American war which broke out in 1775. The English Parliament laid an embargo on the provision trade to the Colonies, and Irish trade with France was subsequently cut off. The linen trade received a blow from the other side of the Atlantic, for it was restricted by the colonial non-importation agreements that were aimed against England. As the war progressed, and France and Spain joined the colonists, England had as much as she could do to carry on hostilities. Nearly all the troops in Ireland were withdrawn; the Channel swarmed with pirates; a French invasion became more than a possibility. The Protestant gentry in alarm for their safety decided to organize a force of their own, and it was in this way that the famous Volunteers came into being. They had most of the nobility and gentry at their head, and so great was the general enthusiasm that they soon numbered 40,000 men.

In the spring of 1779, 19,000 persons connected with the weaving trade in Dublin alone were out of work, and the economic situation as a whole was so bad that public feeling was thoroughly aroused. Swift had advised the Irish long ago to burn everything that came from England except her coal. In imitation of the Americans resolutions were passed against the importation or consumption of any English

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manufactures. Hostile demonstrations were made, and Dublin was flooded with ballads and satirical verses.

*Ye noblemen in place or out,
Ye Volunteers so brave and stout,
Ye dames that flaunt at ball or rout,
Wear Irish manufacture.*

The Volunteers did not need the advice of the populace. They were no longer content to remain a purely defensive force, but were determined to turn England's difficulty to their own advantage. They supported the non-importation agreements, and went even further—they declared for Free Trade and a free Parliament. They were encouraged by universal enthusiasm, resolutions were passed, imposing reviews and military parades were held. The leaders, such as Lord Charlemont and the Duke of Leinster, became national idols.

England was now in a bad way. The war in America was going against her. British trade was suffering through the non-importation agreements. The Volunteers, a fully armed force, could hardly be ignored, nor the strength of public feeling in Ireland. Imperial sentiment in England, moreover, was now on the wane. The American war had given mercantilism its death-blow, and the system was not long in dying. In 1780 the Act that forbade the Irish to export their woollens was repealed, and they might also trade if they wished with the Colonies. On 19th October 1781, Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, and early the next year the Volunteers (now 80,000 strong) at a great meeting held at Dungannon, in the North of Ireland, declared for a free Parliament.

The Government decided to take the only course that was open to them. The Act of George I which bound Ireland to obey laws made in England was repealed. The Irish Parliament could now legislate for itself. The bayonets and determination of the Volunteers had achieved what Burke called 'the Irish analogue of the English Revolution of 1688,' but it had been no less the work of one man. That man was Grattan. By his oratory, his courage, his honesty, and his statesmanship he had impressed all opinions and united all parties. 'Spirit of Swift! Spirit of Molyneux! Your genius

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has prevailed,' he cried in a brilliant speech that he made in the new Parliament; 'Ireland is now a Nation!'¹

It has been said that Grattan was apt to be dazzled by his own eloquence. He had helped to secure the independence of the Parliament, but nothing was really changed in Ireland. The mass of the people were still without votes or representation. The great borough-owners were still in power. Two-thirds of the members of the Irish House of Commons were still placemen or pensioners. Ireland had looked forward to being a 'distinct Kingdom', but there was no Irish Ministry responsible to the Irish Parliament. The English Ministers retained their control over the Irish legislature, the King's veto was still in force. As long as such ties with England remained awkward situations were bound to arise.

The first controversy was over Free Trade. This was a period of commercial depression. Prices fell, and Irish manufacturers called for protection. In March 1784 Pitt, who was a Free Trader on principle, introduced a number of 'Commercial Propositions' by which all prohibitions were to be removed and the duties between the two countries equalized. The scheme was accepted by the Irish Parliament, but so great was the outcry from English manufacturers (a petition from Lancashire alone carried 80,000 signatures) that it was abandoned. As an alternative Pitt brought forward another plan, but as this involved the acceptance by the Irish Parliament of British legislation on matters of trade it was condemned by Grattan, and rejected in Ireland.

The second point of controversy arose over the Regency question. In the autumn of 1788 George III became insane, and while Pitt and the Tories, who were in office, were for granting the Prince of Wales the Regency on restricted terms,

¹ On April 16th Grattan, in a speech two hours long, had moved in the Irish House of Commons an Address to the King containing a declaration of the independence of the Irish Legislature. 'We have committed ourselves,' he wrote to Fox, 'only to measures which are indispensable to our freedom, and which you have thought indispensable to yours. The powers, legislative and jurisdictive, claimed by England are become impracticable. We have rendered them so ourselves, and all we ask of England is that she will withdraw a barren claim, that we may shake hands with her.' (Quoted in Lecky's *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (ed. 1892), Vol. II, pp. 306-7.)

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Fox and the Whigs were for a Regency with full powers. The Irish Parliament, hoping for a more liberal administration, supported the Whigs, and serious trouble would probably have developed had not the King's recovery ended the quarrel.

The third serious difference arose out of the Catholic question. This brought about the 'Fitzwilliam episode', which caused so much ill-feeling in Ireland that it must be considered one of the chief causes of the Rebellion of 1798.

The position of the Catholics in Ireland had greatly improved since the beginning of the century. The Penal Laws had at first been strictly enforced, but as Jacobite feeling died down they had gradually fallen into disuse. Priests openly celebrated Mass, Catholics had been admitted into the Army, and between 1771 and 1782 the chief articles of the Code (those which related, for instance, to the ownership of land) were abolished by Act of Parliament. It had become clear to all liberally minded Protestants that if economic prosperity and Parliamentary Reform were to be secured the influence of the whole people must be brought to bear; and though there were some who considered that the granting of political power to the Catholics would endanger the stability of the State, Protestant opinion as a whole was for Catholic emancipation.¹ The Catholics were no longer a downtrodden class. They had acquired civil rights, they had begun to buy and farm land, they had become merchants and made money in the provision trade. To enlarge and consolidate their gains they now hoped for political power. This was in some measure granted to them in 1793. The Government was alarmed by the increasing hostility of the Protestants, and in order to separate the questions of emancipation and reform, as well as to make a bid for Catholic friendship, an Act was passed conferring upon them the elective franchise. Another step in the

¹ For the gradual relaxation of the Penal Laws see Lecky's *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (ed. 1892), Vol. I, pp. 265-78, 302-12. Bowden remarks in his *Tour through Ireland* (1791) that those 'religious prejudices which for a long time precluded the interchanges of friendly offices, or even common civilities in this city [of Dublin] have now lost all their force' and observes, 'Doctor Fowler, the present Archbishop, and Dr. Troy, the titular Archbishop, are, I understand, constantly together—inseparable friends' (p. 33).

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same direction was taken by the appointment of Lord Fitzwilliam, who was in favour of further concessions, as Viceroy in December 1794. The great borough-owners, however, were hostile, and when Fitzwilliam dismissed the powerful Commissioner of the Revenue, John Beresford,¹ from office he hurried over to England and protested so strongly against the policy advocated by Fitzwilliam that the Viceroy received an official rebuke and resigned. Pitt was afraid, in view of his many difficulties, to alienate any of England's supporters in Ireland, and Beresford, who was commonly known as the 'King of Ireland'—for, as he himself observed, 'no Lord-Lieutenant could exist without my power'—was too influential to be ignored.

The day of Fitzwilliam's departure was observed as a day of mourning in Dublin. Beresford had done much as a member of the Wide Street Commission (appointed in 1757) to beautify the city, and the magnificent Custom House which is its chief ornament was his handiwork; but as the villain of the piece his house was attacked, and so was the Custom House. Fitzgibbon, Earl of Clare,² the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, was almost equally unpopular. He was able, courageous, and sincere, but he represented the most bigoted section of the Ascendancy. He had supported Pitt on the Regency question, he was opposed to Parliamentary Reform, he hated even the idea of making any concessions to the Catholics. 'Great Britain,' he wrote, 'must maintain her connexion with Ireland, and she can only maintain it by supporting the old English interest here.' He thought that the Irish Catholics could never be really conciliated, for, as he explains, 'they know and feel that they can never recover the situation which their ancestors held in Ireland but by separation from

¹ John Beresford (1738–1805) was the second son of Marcus, Earl of Tyrone. He was M.P. for Waterford, 1760–1805, and became first commissioner of the revenue in 1780. He was the principal adviser of Pitt in his Irish policy, and helped to bring about the Union.

² John Fitzgibbon, Earl of Clare (1749–1802), educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and at Oxford, was called to the Irish Bar in 1772, and became Attorney-General in 1783. He was Lord Chancellor of Ireland, 1789–1802. He was a zealous law reformer and an opponent of Catholic emancipation. The passing of the Act of Union was due mainly to him.

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Great Britain.' On the day of the Viceroy's departure Fitzgibbon too was attacked by the mob. The following account of the affair was published by his sister, Mrs. Jeffereys, of Blarney Castle, County Cork, some years after the Union:¹

'On the day Lord Fitzwilliam was recalled, when my brother (as Lord Chancellor) was returning from the Castle, after having assisted at the swearing-in the newly arrived Lord-Lieutenant, a ferocious mob of no less than 6,000 men and several hundred women, assembled together in College Green, and all along the avenue leading to my brother's house [6 Ely Place]. The male part of the insurgents were armed with pistols, cutlasses, sledges, saws, crowbars, and every other weapon necessary to break open my brother's house; and the women were all of them armed with their aprons full of paving-stones. This ferocious and numerous mob began to throw showers of stones into my brother's coach, at his coachman's head, and his horses; they wounded my brother in the temple, in College Green; and if he had not sheltered himself by holding his great square official purse before him, he would have been stoned to death before he arrived (through the backyard) at his own house; where, with several smithy sledges, they were working hard to break into his hall door, *while some others of them had ropes ready to fix up to his lamp-iron to hang him the moment they could find him.* When I arrived, disguised in my kitchenmaid's dress, my blue apron full of stones, I mingled with this numerous mob, and addressed a pale, sickly man, saying: "My dear jew'l, what ill become of hus! I am after running from the Castle to tell yeas all that a regiment of Hos is galloping down here to thrample hus, etc., Oh! yea, yea, where will we go?" Then they cried, "Hurry, Hurry—the Hos is coming to charge and thrample hus!—Hurry for the Custom House." And in less than a moment the crowd dispersed. I then procured a surgeon for my brother [she adds] and a guard to prevent another attack, and thus I saved Lord Clare's life, at the risk of being torn limb from limb, if I had been recognized by any of the mob.'

¹ See the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* (1866), vol. viii, pp. 416-17.

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This rioting was but a foretaste of what was to come. Grattan might work for the reform of Parliament, Free Trade, and Catholic Emancipation, but he was losing his influence. Although he never ceased to have Irish interests at heart, he believed in supporting England in her war with France, and he was as hostile to French principles as Burke himself. 'Touch not this plant of Gallic growth,' was his advice to his fellow-countrymen; 'its taste is death, though 'tis not the tree of knowledge.' The French Revolution as it took its course changed the whole situation in Ireland. It provided the extremists with a philosophy and decided them to take violent action; it frightened the conservative members of the Ascendancy, who determined to resist all reform; it weakened the reforming ardour of those liberals who detested the way of violence. When Grattan's Parliament was first established the Volunteers were still in existence. Before 1782, despite their determined attitude, they had been loyal to the Crown, but as they realized that Parliamentary corruption was likely to continue they adopted a more aggressive attitude. This might easily have led to war, had it not been for the restraining influence of their leader, Lord Charlemont. They held a 'National Convention', with a great show of military force, at the Rotunda, in Dublin, in November 1783. But after they had drawn up a plan of reform which was carried to the House of Commons then sitting Charlemont persuaded them to disperse, for he realized the direction in which events were moving. 'He conducted the Irish nation with incredible temperance,' wrote Barrington¹ in his *Historic Memoirs* many years afterwards, 'and in the midst of tempests flowed on in an unruffled stream of constitutional patriotism, fertilizing the plains of liberty and enlarging the channels of independence, but,' he adds with a touch of disdain, 'he was too smooth and too gentle to turn the vast machinery of radical revolution.'

The Volunteer movement died down. But after the out-

¹ Sir Jonah Barrington (1760-1834), educated at Trinity College, Dublin, was called to the Irish Bar, and became judge in admiralty in 1798. He was member for Tuam in the Irish House of Commons, 1792-8, and for Banagher, 1799-1800. He was deprived of office for appropriating money paid into his court in 1830. The works which he wrote relating to Ireland are highly picturesque, but not always reliable.

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break of the French Revolution its place was taken by a much more violent organization. This was the society of the United Irishmen, which was formed in Belfast in 1791. Nothing has been said of the Presbyterians and other Protestant Dissenters in Ireland, but by the operation of the Test Act they had been subjected to many of the same disabilities as the Catholics during the course of the eighteenth century. Some had escaped from an irksome situation by emigration to America, but at this time they were still strong in the North, and held firm democratic opinions. No town in the British Isles was as revolutionary as Belfast. The *Contrat Social* and Paine's *Rights of Man* were in every hand. Toasts were drunk to Mirabeau and other Revolutionary heroes. The anniversary of the taking of the Bastille was celebrated by banquets and other festivities. At first the aim of the United Irishmen was to work by constitutional means for Emancipation and Reform, but as time went on they abandoned all faith in peaceful methods and declared for a republic. The headquarters of the society were moved to Dublin, committees were formed all over the country, arms were collected, and there were nightly drillings.

The founder of this vast military society was Wolfe Tone,¹ a young Protestant intellectual of great courage whose views have inspired the modern Irish Republican movement. Tone has left an explanation of his aims in his journals and other writings. They were, 'To subvert the tyranny of our execrable government; to break the connexion with England, the never-failing source of our political evils; and to assert the independence of my country.' 'I hate the very name of England,' he wrote, 'and I will hate her always.' He also hated Protestant landlords, and gave them credit for nothing.

¹ Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763-98), was the son of a Dublin coachmaker. He entered Trinity College, Dublin, in 1781, but neglected his studies. After a short time spent in London (he entered the Middle Temple as a student in 1787) he returned to Ireland and took a prominent part in agitating for reform. He went to Paris in 1796 to promote a French expedition against Ireland, and was finally captured in a French ship off Lough Swilly. He committed suicide in prison. Tone's *Autobiography* was edited by R. B. O'Brien (2 vols.) in 1893. For other writings and sources of information see *Theobald Wolfe Tone* by Frank MacDermot (1939).

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'They see Ireland only,' he wrote, 'in their rent rolls, their places, their patronage, and their pensions.' Tone was well read in contemporary French literature, and was deeply interested in the principles of the Revolution. The Irish, he explains, well knew what it was to be 'enslaved', and sympathized most sincerely with the French people. 'We watched their progress to freedom with the utmost anxiety; we had not, like England, a prejudice rooted in our very nature against France. As the Revolution advanced, and as events expanded themselves, the public spirit of Ireland rose with a rapid acceleration.'

There was plenty of material in Ireland to form the groundwork of a Revolution. Ideas from the Continent were spread through the country, not only by the United Irishmen, but by the men who had returned from serving in foreign armies abroad and by the priests who had been educated in foreign seminaries.¹ A new society, that of the Defenders, which resembled the Whiteboys, had also been formed among the peasantry. These understood nothing of Rousseau or Paine, but were in chronic revolt against rents and tithes, and were ready to support the French if they could deliver them from their landlords. The Dublin poor, always in a state of suppressed rebellion, were also highly dissatisfied. The worsted weavers of the Liberties² stated in a petition to Parliament that in two months the value of woollen yarn had fallen 20 per cent, and that of the two thousand looms which were formerly employed in Dublin in 1789 there were not now more than five hundred. This was due to the war, as William Drennan,³ a doctor practising in Dublin, explains in a letter

¹ See Lecky's *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (1892), Vol. III, p. 224.

² The districts known as the Liberties were so called because they were not included in the jurisdiction of the Lord Mayor. They were mainly in the neighbourhood of St. Patrick's Cathedral, one of the oldest and poorest quarters of the city.

There is an account of the various 'Liberties' in Dublin in Warburton's *History of Dublin* (1818), Vol. II, pp. 1040-6.

³ William Drennan (1754-1820), born in Belfast, was educated in Scotland, taking his medical degree at Edinburgh in 1778. He settled in Dublin in 1789 and took a deep interest in politics. He belonged to the Society of United Irishmen, and was tried for sedition, but was acquitted.

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written in May 1793 to his brother-in-law in Belfast: 'The natural vent of the goods in foreign parts is kept shut by the war, while at the same time England is disburthening her glutted market upon us and throwing all at an underselling rate into our market when she cannot dispose of her goods abroad.' The artisans showed their displeasure in various ways. We read, for example, in the *Hibernian Magazine* of how they dressed up effigies in imported clothes of the reigning fashion, and paraded them for two hours in carts through the streets, with ropes suspended from their necks, as if they were being carried to execution. The large mob that gathered to view the sight gave vent to their feelings by groans and hisses.

In February 1793 France had declared war upon England, and, in accordance with traditional Irish policy, Tone and others of the United Irishmen entered into negotiations with her. Tone declared, in a memorial drawn up for the benefit of the French Government, that if only the French would land there would be a successful rising, for the great majority of the people were republican in principle and friendly to France. The Protestant gentry he acknowledged to be loyal to England, but they could be ignored, for they were nothing but 'a colony of strangers' holding their lands by force. Tone went to Paris himself, and actually persuaded the Directory to send an expedition to Ireland. On 15th December 1796, a fleet of forty-three ships carrying 15,000 men left Brest under General Hoche. It was intended to land at Bantry Bay, but the whole plan was spoilt by a storm. England was feeling the strain of the war with France, her financial position was bad, and her fleet on the brink of mutiny; had the French landed, Ireland might have been lost. 'England,' wrote Tone, has not had such an escape since the Spanish Armada.' In the autumn of 1797 a Dutch expedition in conjunction with the French prepared to invade the North of Ireland, but this was defeated by Admiral Duncan at the battle of Camperdown. About the same time disorders broke out in Ulster, where an Orange Society had been formed to combat the new aggressive spirit of the Roman Catholics.

The Orange Society was a sign of the times. Its formation marks the definite revival of anti-Catholic feeling among

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Protestants. The Catholics were favourable to the French Revolution. The French Revolution had made an attack upon property, and the Ascendancy was founded upon property. If the Roman Catholics were admitted to Parliament they would assuredly vote against Protestant interests. They were in league with France, and France was ready to swallow up Europe. As early as October 1792 Westmoreland, who was Viceroy, had written to Pitt, 'It is very extraordinary, but I believe the two sects of Irish hate and fear each other as much as they did one hundred years ago.'

Early in 1798 Beresford had written from Ireland that the country was in a desperate state. 'The seeds of rebellion,' he said, were 'sown far and wide', and 'the Irish Directory have now so organized every part of the Kingdom, that they can make them rise when they please.' But the Government knew through its spies all that was going on, and had put away all thoughts of conciliation. A search for arms was begun, and martial law was proclaimed in many districts. A general rising had been planned for May 23rd, which was to be led by Lord Edward Fitzgerald,¹ brother of the Duke of Leinster. This young man, who had more charm than brains, was of considerable importance on account of his social connexions, so that by his arrest in Dublin on May 19th, and his death not many days afterwards from wounds received in the scuffle, the hopes of the rebels were rudely shaken. They held, however, to their plan of seizing the capital, which they conjectured would give them the whole country. On the night of the 23rd the mail-coaches were stopped on the roads, and signal fires were lit were on the hills. In the neighbourhood of Dublin villages were attacked and houses burned. In Dublin itself many servants and labourers suddenly left their masters, and all the street lamps were put out. 'I remem-

¹ Lord Edward Fitzgerald (1763-98) was the son of James Fitzgerald, first Duke of Leinster. He served in the American War of Independence and also travelled in America. Being cashiered for attending a revolutionary banquet in Paris in 1792, he returned to Ireland, and joined the revolutionary society of the United Irishmen in 1796. Subsequently he headed a military committee to co-operate with French invaders, and was arrested in Dublin on the eve of the Rebellion of 1798—while being arrested he was wounded by Major Sirr, chief of the Dublin police, and died in prison a few days later.

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ber well,' the poet Moore tells us in his *Autobiography*, 'on the night when the rebels were to have attacked Dublin the feelings of awe produced through the city by the going out of the lamps one after another towards midnight.' Others must have felt equally alarmed, for although the plans of the rebels were known to the Government, they had not been made public.

No fighting took place, however, either then or later in Dublin, for the town was well guarded by its citizens and patrolled by yeomanry. As early as 1796 in view of the disturbed state of the country a number of prominent citizens had begun to form yeomanry corps. There were students' corps, lawyers' corps, merchants' corps, and even a corps formed of elderly gentlemen living in the fashionable Merrion Square. These used to parade on fine evenings (as Barrington describes) on every side of the square, drinking tea and playing whist afterwards. But when nights were wet or damp they patrolled through the streets in a long file of sedan chairs with their muskets hanging out of the windows, 'ready to deploy and fire upon any rebel enemy to Church or State who should dare to oppose their progress and manœuvres.' It does not seem likely that this particular *garde de corps* took a prominent part in the day of danger, but there were other volunteers who did their work well. The bridges over the canals were carefully guarded. Alarm bells were set up in various parts of the town, and orders were given that when these were sounded during the night neighbouring householders must place lights outside their windows. No unauthorized persons might appear in the streets between 9 p.m. and 5 a.m., for martial law had been proclaimed. The troops continually searched for arms. Those suspected of having them were tortured or flogged. The convicted were hanged in the Barracks or over Carlisle Bridge. Each day the bodies of rebels killed in the surrounding country were brought into the city in carts, and heaped up in the Castle Yard. Dublin itself was full of rebels and conspirators, but these were soon paralysed by fear.

In the North the risings that took place were not very formidable, for anti-Catholic feeling there was strong, and faith had been lost in the French Revolution. But in the South the

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country was soon so disturbed that many of the Dublin officials thought it wise to send their wives and families over to England. In Kildare, Carlow, and Meath the troops were attacked, and many small villages were taken. Houses were burned and people were murdered. In Wexford the rebels, about 7,000 strong, took Enniscorthy, and afterwards Wexford itself, where they elected Beauchamp Bagenel Harvey, a Protestant gentleman of advanced opinions, as their leader. An attack was then made on New Ross, which was taken, then lost, after which occurred the horrible massacre of Scullabogue. About thirty-seven loyalists who were imprisoned in a barn were shot or piked in cold blood; the rest, some 180 persons, were burned to death. Under another leader, Father John Murphy, the insurgents took Gorey, but were beaten back from Arklow. Reinforcements soon arrived from England, and Enniscorthy and then Wexford were recovered. Here another horrible massacre of Protestants took place. A mock trial of persons who had been confined in the prison was held on the bridge, where ninety-seven persons were done to death, their bodies being thrown into the river below. Cruelties and outrages were not the monopoly of one side. The hospital of the rebels at Enniscorthy was burned, and the wounded shot in their beds. Roman Catholic chapels were destroyed, and women were outraged. The troops and the yeomanry burned down peasants' houses in districts in which crimes had been committed. Floggings and tortures were inflicted on those suspected of carrying arms.¹

The people had been stirred up by the United Irishmen to believe that the French were coming to help them, and a French expedition under General Humbert actually did land at Killala, in Mayo, on August 22nd of this year (1798). Humbert got little help from the peasants of the remote West, who hardly knew one end of a gun from the other, but he had marched half-way across Ireland before he was stop-

¹ 'The barbarities of that period (though not precisely) were pretty nearly balanced between the conflicting parties. Mercy was alike banished by both; and the instruments employed of death and torture, though dissimilar, were alike destructive; the bullet, sabre, bayonet, lash and halter, being met by the pike, the scythe, the blunderbuss, the hatchet and the firebrand.' Barrington's *Personal Sketches* (ed. 1832), Vol. III, pp. 261-2.

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ped by Cornwallis and obliged to surrender his forces. Two other French expeditions subsequently set out for Ireland, but neither was successful. The indomitable Wolfe Tone, who was on board a French ship, was captured in Lough Swilly. He escaped the execution which would otherwise have been inevitable by committing suicide in prison. The rebels in the South had shown remarkable courage and determination, but they had been little more than an unorganized mob, and their speedy defeat was a foregone conclusion. Yet it has been estimated that in the course of the Rebellion at least 15,000 persons were killed. About 1,600 soldiers and 11,000 rebels fell in the field, while 400 loyalists were massacred or assassinated and 2,000 rebels exiled or hanged.

The French Revolution and the results it had produced in Ireland caused a revulsion of feeling and great bitterness among the Ascendancy class. When Sir Ralph Abercromby arrived in Dublin as commander-in-chief he was shocked by the conversation that he heard in the houses of the upper classes. 'This betrayed,' he wrote, 'such unrelenting hostility to the people, and such an ardent desire for the most severe measures unrestrained by law and the authority of civil power,' that he was obliged to withdraw himself altogether from mixed society. 'The principal persons of this country, and the members of both Houses of Parliament,' wrote Cornwallis when he came over as Viceroy, 'are in general averse to all acts of clemency, . . . and would pursue measures that could only terminate in the extermination of the greater number of the inhabitants.' The language of the Castle officials was particularly violent. Edward Cooke, the Under-Secretary, for instance, a reactionary of the type of Beresford and Clare, wrote to Auckland (a member of Pitt's administration) on the eve of the Rebellion, 'I fear relaxation and too much clemency. The snake must be killed—not *scotched*.'

Once the Rebellion was over there was an almost hysterical feeling of relief among the loyalists. The religious service which commemorated the Great Rebellion of 1641 was carefully observed in the churches. On the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne orange cockades were worn, and many of the houses in Dublin were decorated with orange lilies. The

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ceremony which always took place on the birthday of William III was held with great enthusiasm. The statue of the King on College Green was gaily adorned, while the Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Mayor, and sheriffs, accompanied by guards and yeomen, paraded through the town to the sound of bells and cannon. The fashionable preacher of the day, Walter Blake Kirwan,¹ of whom it was said that those who listened to him were as moved as by Garrick in *King Lear* or Mrs. Siddons in *Isabella*, was chosen to celebrate the occasion by giving an address in St. Thomas's Church. A large and important congregation assembled to hear him, among those present being the Lord-Lieutenant. Kirwan spoke on behalf of the widows and children of those of the yeomanry and militiamen who had fallen in the Rebellion, his text being taken from John xiii, 34—'A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another.' The tone of his discourse was one of complete exultation. 'Never shall the monster Jacobinism exult in the ruins of our happy constitution; or the influences, the charities, the hopes of a divine religion, be replaced by a detested system of pretended reason and depraved impiety. . . . Oh! my friends,' cried the preacher, 'from what a destiny have we been saved! Never, never should we forget that signal Providence, which has so long watched over our safety, which unbound the very elements to protect our shores from invasion, that early laid open the whole train of this damnable conspiracy; that on the very eve of its explosion overwhelmed its principal supporters, and prepared every loyal soul to meet a most formidable crisis with the countenance and spirit of heroes. . . . Ireland will be distinguished in the records of time as an illustrious and adamantine rock against which the overwhelming surges of French anarchy have dashed in vain.' Kirwan then drew a picture of the happy condition of his country under Grattan's Parliament. 'Whatever the pride of freemen demanded, the affection, wisdom, policy, and justice

¹ Walter Blake Kirwan (1754-1805) was educated at the Jesuit College at Saint-Omer and studied at Louvain, where he became Professor of Natural and Moral Philosophy in 1777. He was chaplain to the Neapolitan ambassador at the British Court in 1778 and became Protestant Dean of Killala in 1800. See page 172.

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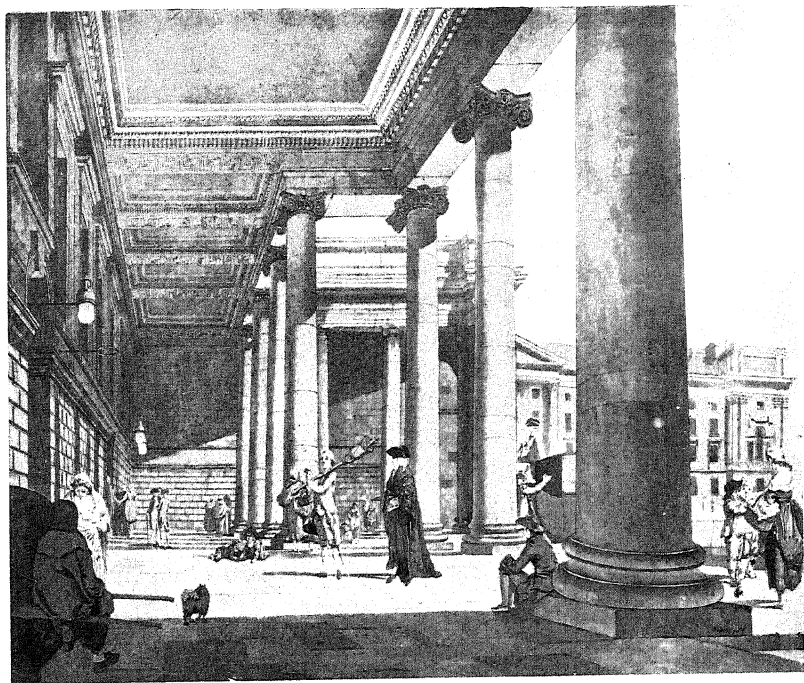
of England had surrendered, or were fast surrendering.' The country was, indeed, quickly approaching 'wealth and prosperity' when suddenly 'the infernal demon of French liberty and equality came, like Satan into Eden, to blast our happiness'. . . . The horrors of the rebellion were next dwelt upon, and the deluded multitude rebuked as follows: 'You have turned the fairest portion of your national soil into a frightful desert; thousands have been reduced by you, from the possession of all human blessings, to a state of houseless misery and despair; thousands have fled, or are flying, in all directions, from the scourge of war, excited by you. The capital is crowded with the mourning widows and orphans of those you have massacred in the coldest blood.' The loyalty and courage of the yeomanry and the militia were then contrasted with this villainy and lauded to the skies; after which came a moving conclusion: 'Let us all raise our eyes with ardent and eternal thanksgiving, for the preservation of religion, liberty, property, and life. And let the walls of this hallowed place, till they moulder into dust, call to the memory and veneration of man the mighty tribute you will this day lay on the altar of public gratitude and virtue.'

Among the fashionable ladies who were present at this remarkable service were Lady Clare and Lady Castlereagh. At its conclusion these two leaders of society assisted in carrying round the plates. The sum of £1,122 was collected — 'the largest collection, I suppose,' wrote Bishop Percy¹ to his wife, 'ever made at a single sermon.'

The loyalists did not have it all their own way, however, for there were riots in Dublin. At Astley's Circus,² in Peter Street, the party tune *Croppies Lie Down* was played every night to the irritation of the popular party and the exultation of the Orangemen who congregated there specially to hear

¹ Thomas Percy (1729-1811), editor of the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, became Bishop of Dromore, Co. Down, in 1782. His wife, Anne Gutteridge, whom he married in 1759, was in 1771 appointed nurse to Prince Edward, afterwards Duke of Kent. She died in 1806.

² Astley's Circus, where feats of horsemanship, dancing, tumbling, and pantomime were performed, was opened in Dublin in 1789. It was very fashionable for a time but declined after the Union.



THE SPEAKER ENTERING THE IRISH HOUSE OF COMMONS
From a drawing by Francis Wheatley, R.A. (1782)



HENRY GRATTAN WEARING THE UNIFORM OF THE
IRISH VOLUNTEERS

From a painting by Francis Wheatley R.A. (1782)

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it.¹ One evening, the moment the band struck up, a number of hot-headed young men jumped into the orchestra-box and broke all the instruments. According to O'Flanagan, a United Irishman, who was present there was 'a general panic and flight,' and only 'a few feeble hisses' from the Orangemen, who 'withdrew like geese'. The Kilkenny militia were on duty at the time, but we learn that 'they sympathized so fully with us that they did not interfere.' The country was still very disturbed. The peasants continued their burnings and murders, the soldiers their floggings and torturings.

Pitt observed to Grattan in 1794, 'What does Ireland want? What would she have more?' This remark seems to show that Pitt had not then considered the Irish question very carefully. But we find Beresford writing to Lord Auckland in the summer of 1798 as follows: 'I am very happy that Mr. Pitt is thinking on the subject of Ireland, the great misfortune of which country has been that for many years Ministers have never thought of her, except when she became extremely troublesome to them, when by some temporary expedient they have patched up a temporary quiet, and left things to chance until another crisis called upon them again to think.' Such a crisis had now arisen, owing to the bitterness of feeling created by the Rebellion. The extreme Ascendancy party were violently anti-Catholic. The revolutionaries were vehemently anti-Ascendancy. The moderates had lost their power. The masses were in a state of desperate exasperation. The Rebellion had been crushed, but events had shown what a dangerous neighbour Ireland could be in time of war, and also what use the French were prepared to make of the country. England was engaged in her great struggle with Napoleon. Whatever was not English was in danger of becoming French. 'Something new must be attempted,' wrote Lord Carlisle, who knew the country, to Auckland. . . . 'Ireland in its present state will pull down England. She is a ship on fire, and must either be cast off, or extinguished.'

¹ The term 'Croppy' was applied by the loyalists to the Irish rebels of 1798, who wore their hair very short as a sign of sympathy with the French Revolution. The wretched 'Croppies' were scourged, pitch-capped, picketed, and shot by the soldiery; hence the bitterness of feeling.

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The question of a legislative union between England and Ireland had long been debated, and it was now revived. It was said that the attempt that England had made to rule her dependency through her Protestant colonists had failed. The Anglo-Irish had often been difficult and aggressive, and they had not succeeded in winning over the masses. It was felt that the country would never be at peace till it was taken out of the hands of the men who had made the civil war, and that the British Parliament would be better able to deal with Irish difficulties than the local body that had made itself unacceptable to the people. 'The Imperial or Dependent Union,' wrote Dean Tucker¹ in his tract *Union or Separation*, 'proved defective. The Federal or Free Union [a reference to Grattan's Parliament] has proved defective. There is therefore no resource now left but a real or incorporated Union. That, or Separation must ensue.'²

Those who were in favour of the Union declared that the measure would be greatly to the advantage of Ireland. She was comparatively poor and weak, and could not but gain by being united to the richest and most powerful country in Europe. 'The union of a child, or rather pigmy, to a giant in strength, commerce and freedom, for mutual support,' in the words of Dean Tucker, was something no Irishman could afford to despise. 'What can any sanguine Irish patriot wish for his country,' wrote Cooke, who was employed by the Government to set forth the arguments in support of the Union, 'but that its inhabitants should attain the same habits, manners, and improvement which make England the envy of Europe, and by what means can she hope to attain that end so effectually as by uniting with her Government and binding up all her interest and concerns in the same bottom?'

¹ Josiah Tucker (1712-99), educated at Oxford, was appointed to the Deanery of Gloucester in 1758. He became famous as a writer on the American troubles, and was the author of many pamphlets mainly dealing with economic matters. He published his *Reflections on Present Matters of Dispute between Great Britain and Ireland* in 1785, and his tract *Union or Separation* appeared in 1799.

² Burke was a strong advocate of the Union. He considered it to be essential to the well-being of both countries, but especially to that of Ireland. See his 'Letter on the Affairs of Ireland' (1797), written shortly before his death.

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Whatever the effect upon Ireland might be, however, the interests of the Empire were of overwhelming importance. 'With almost all Europe leagued against us,' wrote Lord Cornwallis, 'we cannot long exist as a divided nation'; and, in another letter, 'Without a Union the British Empire must be dissolved.' Most people felt with Dean Tucker that the world was then entering upon 'a new epoch of things.' 'New views and new relations political and commercial,' he wrote, 'must arise between States from the coincidences of the times. A strange variation marks this awful period and renders uncertain the pending issue of affairs. It will therefore be at least wise in every branch of the British Empire to coalesce and consolidate her energies, that she may meet this moment of trial with a commanding aspect.'

Tucker refers with contempt to 'those flaming patriots,' (as they would be thought), 'who have called the Union an act whereby 'a youthful and rising body is coupled to one old in decay and tumbling into dissolution.' There were many others, however, who opposed the measure on more particular grounds. Ireland would be too poor, they said, to bear the weight of English taxation. The English Parliament would subordinate Irish interests, especially Irish economic interests to her own. The Protestant gentry would leave the country, taking their incomes with them. The City of Dublin was strongly opposed to the Union, and for this very reason. All who had houses and land feared that their property would deteriorate. Those who had shops and businesses anticipated loss of trade. Artisans and workmen feared unemployment. During the Parliamentary debates the mob attacked some of the supporters of the Union and tried to throw their carriages into the river. Castlereagh¹ himself was mobbed, and only warded off attempts on his life by thrusting a pair of pistols through the windows of his coach. His effigy later was burned in the streets.

Grattan and the Patriots were naturally opposed to the

¹ Robert Stewart, second Marquis of Londonderry, better known as Viscount Castlereagh (1769-1822), acted as Chief Secretary to the Viceroy, 1797-8, and forestalled the Irish Rebellion by arresting the leaders. He was Chief Secretary for Ireland, 1799-1801, and was responsible for the Union being accepted by the Irish Parliament.

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Union, since it did not represent the wishes of the majority. 'Without union of hearts,' Grattan declared in his last speech in the Irish House of Commons, 'identification is extinction, is dishonour, is conquest.' He believed, moreover, that the Union would not be permanent. 'The Constitution may for a time be lost—the character of the country cannot be so lost. The Ministers of the Crown may at length find that it is not so easy to put down for ever an ancient and respectable nation by abilities however great, by power and corruption however irresistible. Liberty may repair her golden beams, and with redoubled heart animate the country.'

Grattan predicted that the Protestant would be the first victim of the Union—and so, indeed, it turned out. The pick of the Irish gentry followed their political importance to London. They neglected their estates, and as they had to spend more, resorted to increasingly severe expedients to get their rents. The agrarian trouble that had started in the eighteenth century increased. The pressure of democratic opinion brought the Land Acts and the shrinking of landlord power.¹

Grattan's idea had been to unite the Patriots and the Nation, and had it not been for the Rebellion and the Union his policy might have been successful. As it was the Irish gentry had not deserved ill of their country. The period covered by Grattan's Parliament was the most prosperous Ireland had ever experienced. Despite occasional periods of depression, caused by circumstances outside their control, both imports and exports had increased. The linen and provision trades had flourished. Four thousand hands had been employed in the woollen industry in Dublin. There were nearly 2,000 silk-looms at work there. A variety of new industries had been established. The Parliament did what it could to develop natural resources, and agriculture was stimulated by a deliberate policy—that of granting bounties on the export of corn. 'It seems reasonable to suppose,' wrote Lord Sheffield² in 1785, 'that while the election is in the hands of

¹ For this period see the Right Hon. Sir James O'Connor's *History of Ireland* (1798–1924), 2 vols. (1925).

² John Baker Holroyd, first Earl of Sheffield (1735–1821), was a prolific writer on social and commercial subjects, and his estate in Sussex (purchased

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men of property and consideration the elected will fulfil the purpose of legislation better than those sent by the multitude, which has neither property nor judgment.' This was a typical pronouncement of the time; but, although it was not a democratic age, the Irish gentry did not neglect the poor. They acted as Governors of charitable institutions, sat upon boards of hospitals, organized entertainments for the relief of debtors in the prisons, and appointed committees to examine work and wages.¹ It was the gentry, too, who set the standard for the intellectual life of the country, and interested themselves in literature and art. As Froude wrote:

'In the last century Ireland had an intellectual life. Besides her popular orators, she produced artists, men of letters, statesmen, soldiers, the best of which the Empire had to boast. Society was then never anywhere perhaps more brilliant than in Dublin in the years which succeeded 1782. The great Peers and Commoners had cast in their lot with the national life. They had their castles in the country, and their town houses in the Irish metropolis. Their lives had a public purpose. They were conscious of high responsibilities; and if they were not always wise, they had force and dignity of character.'

It would probably have been better, as Froude himself believed, if England had never confiscated the lands of the Irish—never attempted to force upon them a landed gentry of alien blood. Having done this, however, she should have allowed her colonists sufficient freedom to produce that economic prosperity by means of which they would surely have won over the people. 'Make Ireland rich,' said the

in 1769) was regarded as a model of farming. He was created an Irish baron in 1781 and Earl of Sheffield and Viscount Pevensey in the peerage of Ireland, 1816. He became the President of the Board of Agriculture in 1803 and lord of the Board of Trade in 1809.

¹ There is an account, for example, in the *Hibernian Magazine* of May 1787, of the philanthropic efforts of Lord Earlsfort to improve the prisons of Dublin. He visited several, liberated prisoners at his own expense, and 'in a most feeling manner warned the Grand Jury of the necessity there was of their paying a proper attention to the state of the gaols,' the 'horrors' of which he declared to be 'shocking to humanity'.

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author of a seventeenth-century pamphlet, 'and they will be your bees and bring honey to your hive. Keep them poor, and that Kingdom will provide nothing but wasps to sting you: the English will leave the country, and then it will fall into the hands of the Irish.'¹

From the Union till the death of George IV was a dreary and sad but a fairly peaceful period in Irish history. The professional and commercial classes did not do badly, but the houses of the country gentry were becoming more and more dilapidated, and the peasant was almost as wretched as in the days of Swift. The Catholics gradually prepared the way for full political emancipation, and in 1829 the Bill was passed that admitted them to Parliament. Lord Anglesey wrote to Lord Cloncurry² towards the end of the next year that he noted 'a growing spirit [in England] to take Ireland by the hand, and a determination not to neglect her or her interests.' But the majority of the Irish, inspired by their national tradition and stimulated by O'Connell, were henceforth determined to shape their own destiny.

With the growth of the Gaelic spirit the old Ascendancy came to be regarded with disgust, and the Anglo-Irish were described as a caste who had done little but exploit the country in their own interests. The reader of this book must judge for himself, but he will be interested to learn that some of the views of Irish politicians to-day, especially on economic questions, are of eighteenth century origin—the precepts of Berkeley and Swift are not forgotten; while most of the societies and institutions that flourish at present in Dublin, such as the Royal Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy, date the back to Georgian period. The Irish capital itself, as far as brick and stone are concerned, is still

¹ 'We are like a rich lead mine in the hands of England . . . if the ore were well wrought and fully refined, she might turn it all into sterling silver.' Madden's *Reflections* (1738), p. 112.

² Valentine Browne Lawless, second Baron Cloncurry (1773-1853), was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He entered the Middle Temple, but became a United Irishman, and was arrested on a charge of suspicion of high treason, but discharged, in 1798. He was arrested a second time, and committed to the Tower, 1799-1801. Later he lived in Ireland and published his *Personal Reminiscences* in 1849.

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essentially a city of the past—an eloquent reminder of an old aristocratic society that, with all its faults, not only achieved distinction at home, but upheld the standards of that age and even added to its culture.

CHAPTER II

Growth and Development of the City

Dublin is the second city in his Britannic Majesty's dominions, and may rank with the very finest cities of Europe for extent, magnificence, and commerce.

JAMES MALTON, *A Picturesque and Descriptive View of
the City of Dublin* (1792-99)

THE earliest map of the city of Dublin was that published by John Speed, the antiquary, in 1610. This shows us the town surrounded by its medieval walls pierced by gates and surrounded by towers. It lies for the most part on the south side of the Liffey, the enclosed area being about a mile in circumference. The chief landmarks are the Castle, built in King John's time; the two cathedrals of Christ Church and St. Patrick's; a single bridge over the river, dating from the thirteenth century; and Queen Elizabeth's newly founded college of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. The college was not then in the city itself, but lay outside the walls on Hoggen Green, a little to the eastward. That Dublin at the beginning of the seventeenth century was quite a small town is what one might expect, for up to the end of the sixteenth century it was never more than a garrison in a half-conquered country. Ireland was temporarily subdued under Elizabeth and more completely Anglicized than at any time since the first conquest. A season of prosperity might then have set in, but that the peace that followed did not last. The Irish were soon in rebellion again, and drew upon their country the terrible vengeance of Cromwell.

With the Restoration a more settled period began, and it is from this that we must date the first real expansion of

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Dublin. About this time the old medieval walls vanished. Quays were built along the river, and bridges were made. The timbered houses of the Tudor age began to disappear and gave place to others of brick and stone. St. Stephen's Green¹ and Phoenix Park (the St. James's Park and Hyde Park of Dublin) were laid out, and the Royal Hospital of Kilmainham for old and infirm soldiers (the first of the great public buildings) was built.² A new setback to urban development came with the Jacobite Wars, which brought troubles and misfortunes in their train, but when these were over and the Treaty of Limerick signed another season of calm began—this lasted a hundred years.

The Protestant gentry were now firmly fixed in power. They began to feel secure for the first time for centuries in a land no longer at war, and came to regard it as a home. What was more natural than that they should look upon Dublin, seat of the Government and of their own Parliament, with pride? The development begun in Restoration times was resumed. By the end of the eighteenth century the city was more than an Anglo-Irish stronghold. It had a character of its own, and had taken on the air of a capital.

Those who enjoy poring over old maps should look at that of Dublin published by Charles Brooking in 1728.³ This plan, reproduced in the seventh volume of Gilbert's *Calendar of the Ancient Records of the City*, shows that the town had developed considerably since 1610. Hoggen Green—or

¹ Originally an unenclosed common belonging to the Corporation, St. Stephen's Green was laid out in lots for building in 1663. Later it was surrounded by a ditch and low wall, and after the Union, levelled and drained. It was opened as a public park in 1880.

² This beautiful and imposing building (built 1680-7) is now in decay. It has been supposed to have been designed by Wren, but the architect was Sir William Robinson, Surveyor-General (d. 1712).

³ See 'Notes on some Dublin City Maps' by J. L. McCrossan in *The Irish Book Lover* for July and August, 1938. There are maps in volume iv of the Georgian Society publications showing Dublin both at the beginning and at the end of the eighteenth century. See 'A Contribution towards a Catalogue of Engravings of Dublin' by E. MacDowel Cosgrave in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. xxxv (1905) and vol. xxxvi (1906) and *Catalogue of Irish Topographical Prints and Original Drawings* (ed. R. M. Elmes) (Dublin Stationery Office, 1943).

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College Green, to give it its modern name—is no longer a meadow without the walls, but is surrounded by buildings. The space between this and the Castle, situated on Cork Hill—the highest part of the town—is built over. A great many houses have sprung up on the north side of the river, where Henry Street and Capel Street are complete. Dominick Street and Henrietta Street, although not shown on the map, had already been planned.

Rocque's map, published in 1754 and reproduced by Gilbert in his eleventh volume, illustrates the next stage of development. It shows that much land had been reclaimed from the sea on both the north and south side of the river, where quays had been built, together with a long range of houses. Essex Bridge (so called after the Viceroy in 1676), the most interesting architecturally of the old Dublin bridges and the most important, because it was the chief artery of traffic until the erection of Carlisle Bridge, lower down the river, in 1793, had been rebuilt. Upper Sackville Street, with its fashionable mall ornamented with lamps and obelisks, had been laid out. The Lying-in Hospital, an imposing building on the north side, was finished, and so was the fine mansion that the Earl of Kildare had built for himself in Molesworth Fields. This move into comparative 'country' by the chief leader of Dublin society had attracted people of wealth and position into the same neighbourhood, and had led to the erection of Kildare and Molesworth Streets.

The map that Malton includes in his volume of plates shows that by the time he had finished his series of drawings of Dublin buildings in 1799 nearly all the large squares and houses had appeared and most of the magnificent public buildings had been finished. Merrion Square and St. Stephen's Green, to the south, and Rutland Square, in the north, are each surrounded by the houses of gentry and nobility. Lord Charlemont had completed his house in Palace Row, on the north side of Rutland Square, the first of a series of aristocratic mansions. Sackville Street, the abode of fashionable people and wealthy merchants, had been continued to the river, over which the new Carlisle Bridge had been built. This street, stretching as it did all the way from the north side to the Liffey, was reputed the broadest and finest in

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Europe.¹ In addition to the Parliament House, which dates from an earlier period, Dublin could now boast of the Royal Exchange, the Custom House, and the Four Courts—a collection of buildings which, as Macaulay observed, would have been thought magnificent even in Paris. The Irish capital was now at least seven miles in circumference, and her population—which in Speed's day was 26,000—was roughly estimated at 200,000 souls.

The first of the great public buildings which made Dublin famous for its architecture in the eighteenth century was the Parliament House, of which the first stone was laid in 1728. Seventeenth-century Parliaments had been held in Chichester House, in College Green, once the property of the Lord Deputy Sir Arthur Chichester. But this building had fallen into decay, and it was now razed to the ground. The architect of the new Parliament House was Sir Edward Lovet Pearce, Surveyor-General of Ireland.² Pearce had visited Italy, and made sketches in Venice and elsewhere, and, in the words of a contemporary, the Parliament House in Dublin was built in 'the true Italian taste'. This fine building, with its great Ionic columns, entablature, court, and arched entrances, received considerable additions during the course of the eighteenth century. When the repeal of Poynings' Law in 1782 gave independence to the Irish legislature and increased its consequence it was felt that extra accommodation was required. An eastern portico which provided a separate entrance for the House of Lords was added in 1785. This portico, connected by a circular screen to the principal façade in College Green, was not, as might be supposed, built in the Ionic style to match the front. To meet a difficulty of differing street levels Corinthian pillars were used, and thus additional height was gained without clumsiness. This mixture of styles has been much criticized, but the general effect is unspoiled. Gandon, builder of the Custom

¹ The greater part of Sackville Street was destroyed in 1916 and 1921. After the rebuilding it was renamed O'Connell Street.

² For Sir Edward Lovet Pearce, see an article by T. U. Sadleir in the *Kildare Archaeological Journal* for July 1927. There is a plan of the Parliament House showing the original building and its extensions later in M. Craig's *Dublin* (1952), p. 126.

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House, of whom something will be said presently, was the architect. In 1797 further additions to the Parliament House were made by Robert Parke, the designs having been probably furnished by Gandon. A western portico looking on to Foster Place was built with Ionic pillars. This was united by a circular piazza to the main edifice in College Green. The whole building, which covered about one and a half acres, was now complete. The total cost, which was borne by the Irish Parliament, amounted to £95,000.

After a description of the outside of the building, 'the noblest structure Dublin has to boast,' Malton gives the following account of the interior:

'The Commons' Room is truly deserving of admiration. Its form is circular, 55 feet in diameter, inscribed in a square. The seats whereon the members sit are disposed around the centre of the room in concentric circles one rising above another. About 15 feet above the level of the floor, on a cylindrical basement, are disposed sixteen Corinthian columns supporting a rich hemispherical dome which crowns the whole. A narrow gallery, for the public, about 5 feet broad, with very convenient seats, is fitted up with a balustrade in front between the pillars. The appearance of the house assembled below from the Gallery corresponds with its importance, and presents a dignity that must be seen to be felt; the strength of the orator's eloquence receives additional force from the construction of the place and the vibration in the Dome.¹ . . . The House of Lords is situated to the right of the Commons and is also a noble apartment. The body is 40 feet long by 30 feet wide, in addition to which at the upper end is a circular recess 13 feet deep like a large niche wherein the Throne is placed under a rich canopy of crimson velvet; and at the lower end is the Bar, 20 feet square. The room is ornamented at each end with Corinthian columns with niches between. The entablature of the order goes round the room, which is covered with a rich trunk ceiling.

¹ Malton's description of the Irish House of Commons was written before the fire (27th February 1792) which destroyed the dome and part of the Chamber. The new dome was built in the shape of a wagon-head. The new Chamber was circular in form. (See the footnote on page 21.)

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On the two long sides of the room are two large pieces of tapestry now rather decayed; one represents the Battle of the Boyne, and the other that of Aughrim [siege of Londonderry?].¹ . . . Here again, the House assembled from below the Bar, a high scene of picturesque grandeur is presented, and the Viceroy on the Throne appears with more splendour than His Majesty himself on the throne of England.'

Wesley, who visited the Parliament House in 1787, like many other English visitors, considered the House of Lords to 'exceed' that of Westminster, and declared the Commons to be 'a noble room indeed'. He did not, however, approve of the 'large apparatus' provided for 'good eating', the size of the kitchens, or the long tables laid out for dinner. 'Alas, poor Ireland,' he observes complainingly in his *Journal*, 'who shall teach thy very Senators wisdom?' But the dinners of the House as described by Sir Jonah Barrington were not without their redeeming features; 'all distinctions as to government or opposing parties,' we learn, 'were totally laid aside; harmony, wit, wine, and good humour reigning triumphant.'

After the Union the Bank of Ireland bought the old Parliament House from the Government for £40,000. Certain alterations were then carried out under the supervision of Francis Johnston, the most talented architect of the early nineteenth century in Dublin.² The open circular piazza

¹ See A. K. Longfield, 'The History of Tapestry-making in Ireland in the 17th and 18th Centuries,' *Journal Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. lxxviii (June 1938), pp. 91-105, and 'Irish Tapestries in the Bank of Ireland,' *op cit.*, vol. lxxix, pp. 117-18.

² Francis Johnston (1761-1829) after Gandon the greatest name in Irish architecture, was the son of an Armagh builder and brother of Richard Johnston who designed the Assembly Rooms of the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin. Between 1784 and 1793 he was at Armagh where he carried out architectural work for Primate Robinson. He subsequently became architect to the Board of Works, residing in Dublin. Here he rebuilt St. Andrew's Church, altered the Parliament House and the Viceregal Lodge in the Park, designed St. George's Church, the cash office of the Bank of Ireland, the Infirmary of the Foundling Hospital, the Castle Chapel, and the General Post Office. He was also the founder of the Royal Hibernian Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, incorporated in 1823. Johnston at one time lived at number 64

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designed by Parke on the west side was filled in as a solid wall with pillars on the face, and columns were introduced into Gandon's plainer wing wall towards Trinity College to correspond. The doorways of the eastern portico were closed, and new gateways were added. It is said that the British Government when consenting to the sale secretly stipulated that the appearance of the building should be changed, to reconcile the Dublin public to the Union. The House of Commons was certainly transformed for office purposes, though the House of Lords was left undisturbed. An Irish correspondent in the *Hibernian Magazine* for 1810 refers bitterly to 'the miserable spectacle of a murdered Parliament'. The former splendours of the old Parliament House were not easily forgotten.

The next building of importance erected in Dublin was the Royal Exchange, described by Malton as 'one of the principal ornaments of the city'. In order to get a suitable design the Dublin merchants offered a premium—one of the first instances of an architectural prize on record. The successful candidate was Thomas Cooley, of London, of whom very little is known except that he had been employed by Robert Milne, the architect of Blackfriars Bridge, and was an admirer of Inigo Jones. Later he designed the Marine School, Newgate Prison, and other buildings in Dublin.¹

Eccles Street, Dublin, part of which (that decorated with exterior medallions) he built himself, as well as the stables, which were in Gothic style, surmounted by a medieval church tower in which he placed a ring of bells, which he ultimately presented to St. George's Church. There is an article on Francis Johnston by John Betjeman in the *Irish Builder* for 28th March 1942, and another by the same author in *The Pavilion* (a contemporary collection of British Art and Architecture) 1947. See also a note upon this Irish architect in *The Irish Book Lover* for May 1942, by Colm O'Lochlainn.

¹ Many of the original water-colours, and pen drawings for churches, of Thomas Cooley relating to the architectural work which he did in Ireland, were discovered recently by Mr. John Betjeman in the Library at Armagh, where Cooley was employed by the great Primate Robinson, a notable builder of churches. Mr. Betjeman has also distinguished himself by rediscovering several hundred original drawings by Francis Johnston in the archives of the Institute of Architects, Merrion Square, Dublin. He spent some years cataloguing these with the aid of Mr. Leask, Mr. T. L. Collinson, and Miss Butler. They are now in the National Library, Kildare Street, Dublin.

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The Exchange, erected between 1769 and 1779, stands on Cork Hill, close by the Castle. It is a solid structure in the Corinthian style, and has a spacious dome with twelve circular windows supported by fluted columns. A large part of the cost was borne by the Irish Parliament, but some £26,000 was raised by lotteries specially organized for the purpose. When the English and Irish currencies were amalgamated in 1825 the Exchange was no longer needed, and was used for a diversity of purposes. At one time it was a military depot, at another a Corn Exchange. In 1852 it was bought by the Dublin Corporation, and it is now the City Hall.

Another prominent Dublin landmark which figures in Malton's *View* is the Lying-in Hospital, in Great Britain Street, built between 1751 and 1757 and said to have been the first maternity hospital established in the British Isles. The 'New Gardens' were laid out at the same time as the hospital. These were originally enclosed by a wall, but this was taken down in 1784, when handsome railings adorned with lamps were set up in its place. At the time of the alterations the gardens were renamed Rutland Square in honour of the Duke of Rutland, then Viceroy.¹

Nothing shows the growth of prosperity in Dublin at this time so well as the expansion of Trinity College. From its first foundation in 1591 to the opening of the eighteenth century the University of Dublin had passed through many vicissitudes. It had suffered during the Cromwellian wars and again during the Jacobite troubles. When James II had landed in Ireland it was seized by his orders for a barracks. The Provost and Fellows fled away to England, and most of the plate was removed for safety. But after the Battle of the Boyne, when the Protestant interest in Ireland was made secure, the College resumed its normal life, and, like the rest

¹ Charles Manners, fourth Duke of Rutland, was the eldest son of John Manners, Marquis of Granby, and succeeded to the dukedom in 1779. He became Lord-Steward and Privy Councillor in 1783, and Lord Privy Seal in Pitt's ministry. He was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1784. He advocated the Union and passed, with some concessions, Pitt's commercial propositions through the Irish Parliament. He gave magnificent entertainments in Dublin, and made a tour through Ireland in 1787. He died of a fever in Dublin in 1787.

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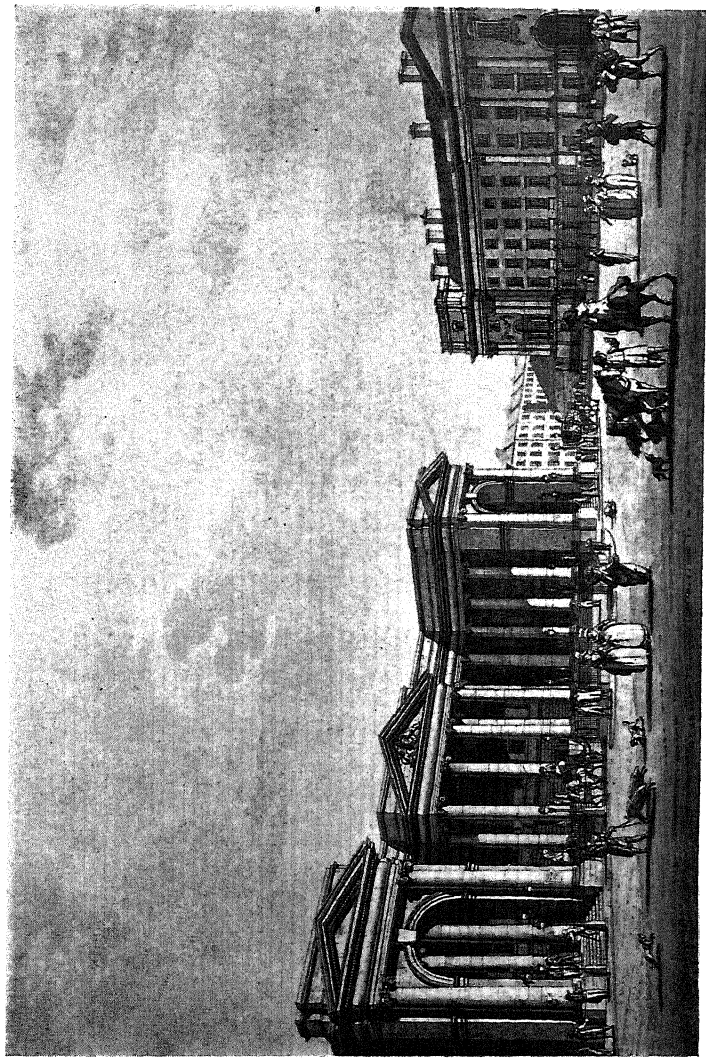
of the country, enjoyed a period of peace which lasted until the end of the century. Early in that century what was known as the Library Square was built, and the College Park was laid out and planted with trees. In 1711 a Laboratory and Anatomical Theatre were erected, and a Printing House, described by Malton as 'a small Doric Temple of stone', was finished in 1734.¹ The magnificent Library (in Jacobean style) which gave its name to the Square was begun in 1712 and completed in 1732.² Between 1755 and 1759, the old front of the College having been taken down, a splendid façade 300 feet in length and 65 feet high, pierced by a gateway and graced by a pediment, was erected. This great front, facing College Green, of which an illustration will be found facing p. 192, is one of the chief architectural beauties of Dublin. It is said to have been planned by Sir William Chambers,³ but was actually designed by Keene and Sanderson, of London. Keene built the Observatory at Oxford.⁴ Between 1752 and 1759 a new front square was laid out, and called Parliament Square in honour of the Irish Parliament, which bore the cost of the building. Within this square a new Dining Hall, as well as a Chapel and Theatre—all in the

¹ The money for the building of the College Printing House, which was designed by Richard Cassels, was given by the Vice-Chancellor, John Stearne, Bishop of Clogher. Bishop Berkeley presented a fount of Greek type in 1734, and the first book that appeared was an edition of the *Prognostics* of Hippocrates by Henry Cope, the State Physician. In 1738 the Press issued an edition of the 'Seven Select Dialogues' of Plato in Greek dedicated to Bishop Stearne. Several other classical authors edited by Fellows of the College were printed here during the period. The earliest scientific book was Helsham's *Lectures on Natural Philosophy*, edited by Dr. Bryan Robinson, 1739.

² The College Library was designed by Thomas Burgh, Surveyor-General (d. 1730), an Irish architect who had served in the Williamite wars. He also built the old Custom House, the Royal Barracks, St. Werburgh's Church and Dr. Stevens' Hospital.

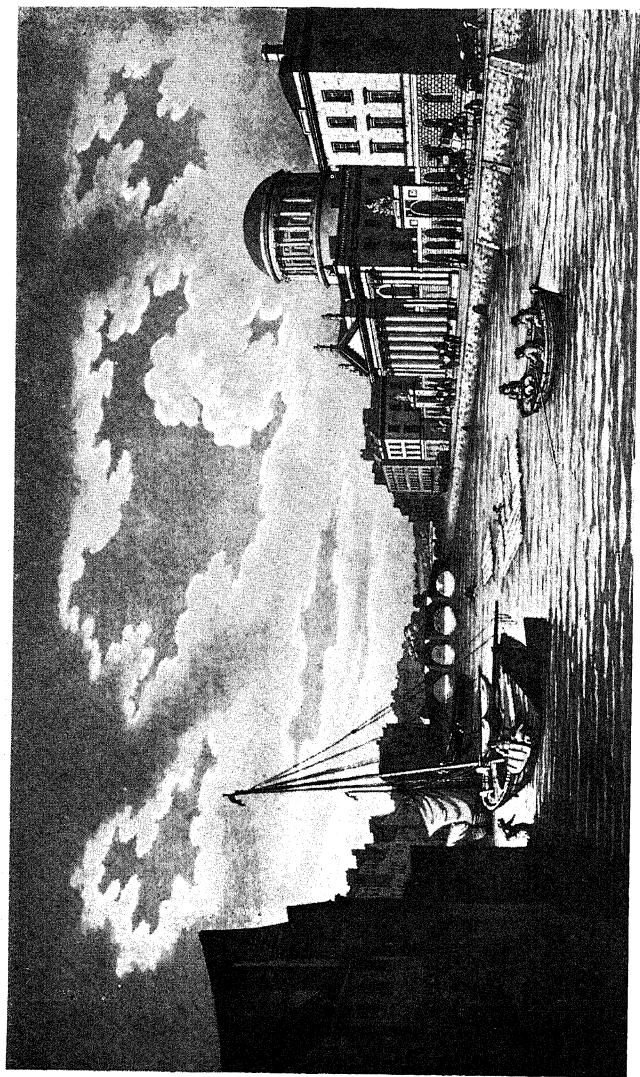
³ Sir William Chambers (1726-96) studied architecture in Italy and Paris and settled as an architect in London in 1755. He was employed at Kew Gardens, 1757-62, and designed Somerset House in 1775. He published his *Treatise of Civil Architecture* in 1759.

⁴ See a note on 'Henry Keene and John Sanderson in Dublin' in *Country Life*, 11th May 1945, pp. 824-5.



THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE, DUBLIN

From James Malton's *Picturesque and Descriptive View of the City of Dublin* (1792-99)



VIEW OF THE LAW COURTS LOOKING UP THE RIVER
From James Malton's *Picturesque and Descriptive View of the City of Dublin* (1793-99)

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classical style of the period—was presently added. The first of these buildings was designed by Cassels, the other two by Sir William Chambers. Chambers was never actually in Ireland, for, as he explained in a letter to Lord Charlemont written in 1779, he was then fully occupied in London. He was engaged in building Somerset House, 'a vast work' that absorbed his attention.

The reader may be interested to learn that, although Trinity College is an Elizabethan foundation, none of the buildings existing at present are prior to Queen Anne. Considerable changes have been effected, moreover, since the eighteenth century. Parliament Square and the Library Square have now been joined into one, and a number of other buildings—the Engineering School and the Graduates' Memorial Building, for example—have been added to the College in the styles of the nineteenth century. By far the most pleasing architectural features, however, are those that belong to the Georgian period—the classical Western Front and the dignified buildings in the Front Square designed by Cassels and Chambers.

'Ireland has given to the Empire soldiers and statesmen, poets and orators, philosophers and divines, men of science and men of action, governors, ministers and judges, in numbers and eminence quite out of proportion to her population and her advantages; but of architects of the first, or even the second class, no Irishman has inscribed his name on the Roll of Honour as a designer of great works at home or abroad.' This sentence, which occurs in a volume recently published, gives food for thought. It must be conceded that Ireland, which has more antiquities to the square mile than most countries, is not strong in architecture, and that the chief architects of the Dublin buildings in the great Georgian period were English or foreign. Cassels, who built Leinster House, for the Earl of Kildare, was German. Sir William Chambers, who designed plans for Lord Charlemont and some of the finest buildings in the University, was a Scotsman. Gandon, to whom Dublin owes its chief architectural glories—the Four Courts and Custom House—was English. Yet at least six Irishmen could be named who left creditable work in their native capital during the Augustan period,

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and of these the most interesting is undoubtedly Thomas Ivory.¹

Ivory, who is not to be confused with an architect of the same name living at Norwich, started life as a carpenter in Cork. He came early to Dublin, where he studied drawing, and was soon looked upon as a superior draughtsman. His masterpiece is The Hospital and Free School of Charles II, commonly known as the Blue-coat School, which was erected between 1773 and 1783 on the north side of the Liffey, near the site of the original building, which had fallen into decay. This stone structure, with its elegant frontage of 300 feet, consisting of a central portion in the Ionic style, surmounted by a tower and elongated into two wings, is one of the most beautiful, though (curiously enough) least-noticed buildings in Dublin. It would have been more beautiful still had Ivory's original plans been carried out, but these had unfortunately to be cut down for reasons of cost. The disappointment of the architect is registered by Trotter, a contemporary artist, in an oil picture which commemorates the conference for the reduction of the plans. Ivory is seated at a table in the midst of a group of gentlemen connected with the foundation. His manner in council is obviously polite, but the whimsically dissentient expression recorded by the painter tells its own tale. This charming conversation piece hangs in the school board-room, which with its beautiful stucco ceiling and finely proportioned woodwork, is one of the most graceful interiors in Dublin. Another of Ivory's buildings, less imposing but equally beautiful, is what was then Newcomen's Bank, near the Castle, now a Government department. The delicate adornment of the exterior, condemned by some Irish contemporaries as too 'elaborate', is interesting because it shows the Adam style of architecture, which was coming into fashion in Dublin towards the end of the century.²

James Gandon, who did most to beautify Dublin in this period, was born in London in 1743. He studied at the famous

¹ There is an interesting short account of Thomas Ivory (d. 1786) in the *Anthologia Hibernia* (1793), vol. i, pp. 334-5. It has been conjectured that this was written by Gandon.

² This building (designed in 1781) can be seen in the illustration by Brocas opposite p. 225.

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Shipley's Drawing Academy, and then was apprenticed to Sir William Chambers. In 1769 he won the first gold medal awarded for architecture by the newly-founded Royal Academy with a design for a triumphal arch commemorating the Seven Years' War, and seven years later gained first prize by his plans for the Bethlehem Hospital. Gandon also designed the Court House and Prison at Nottingham, and was entrusted with the continuation of Colin Campbell's¹ *Vitruvius Britannicus*—an important task for a young man. Among the influential persons whom he met through Sir William Chambers was the Princess Dashkof,² who invited him to make a professional visit to St. Peterburg, and his life might have been very different had he not come into touch with Lord Charlemont and a number of other Irish gentlemen interested in architecture. These determined to secure his services for Ireland. Through them he was introduced to the Right Hon. John Beresford—the man who directed his fate.

Beresford, as Chief Commissioner for the Irish Revenue, had obtained an order from the Parliament to erect a new customs house, the older one farther up the river being inconvenient for large ships. For this important building he invited Gandon to become architect. Early in 1781 the offer was accepted, and the Englishman and his family installed

¹ Colin Campbell (d. 1729), whose best-known work was Wanstead House, Essex, was a protégé of Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington, whom he assisted in the reconstruction of Burlington House, London. At Burlington's suggestion he published three volumes known as *Vitruvius Britannicus; or, The British Architect*, containing three hundred illustrations and plans of English buildings, between 1717 and 1725. This work was continued by John Woolfe and James Gandon and published in London in five folio volumes in 1767-71.

² The Princess Dashkof (1744-1810) was married at fifteen and left a widow three years afterwards. She was an intimate friend of Catherine II, but quarrelled with her and decided to travel abroad. She had studied at the University of Moscow and was very well educated; this procured for her the *entrée* to the society of the learned in most of the capitals of Europe. She returned to Russia in 1782, and was again taken into favour by the Empress who appointed her 'directeur' of the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts and Sciences. On the accession of the Emperor Paul in 1796 she lost favour at Court and retired to her estate at Novgorod. Her *Memoirs* were published in London in 1840.

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themselves in Dublin, henceforth to be their home. It is not necessary to give a detailed account of the Custom House, the great architectural glory of Dublin, which, built of granite and Portland stone, stands in isolated splendour upon the river, with its four great decorated fronts and its gigantic dome, for the reader can turn to the illustration opposite p. 256, which is taken from Malton's *View*. 'The Custom House of Dublin,' wrote Sir Reginald Blomfield in his *History of Renaissance Architecture in England*, 'ranks high in the architecture of the eighteenth century. With Newgate Prison and Somerset House it represents the final effort of the eighteenth-century tradition, and the three are probably the finest public buildings erected in Great Britain since the time of Wren.'

Gandon's Irish experiences are recorded in his journal, from which extracts are given in the interesting biography of this architect by Thomas James Mulvany, published in 1847. His first impression of Dublin as an artistic centre was not at all favourable. 'In traversing a city of such large extent, the capital of a kingdom,' he writes, 'I was greatly surprised to find but *one* print shop. . . . The few houses to which I had access scarcely possessed a picture or print, and those which they had were but indifferent.' Gandon also complains that few professional architects were employed by the gentry, who it was said, preferred to design their houses themselves.¹

¹ In Ireland, as in England at this period, many gentlemen designed their own houses with the aid of local builders and masons. They bought Batty Langley's *Treasury of Designs* or Plaw's *Rural Architecture*, which provided plans and drawings for houses of all sizes, or *The Builder's Pocket Treasure* or *Palladio Delineated* or *The Gentleman's and Builder's Companion*, which contained useful designs for doors, gateways, piers, pavilions, temples, chimney-pieces, pier-glasses, and the decoration of ceilings. Irish landlords, were certainly more dependent on local craftsmen than their neighbours in England, for they had less professional talent to draw upon. One of the most remarkable examples of the amateur 'architect' in Ireland was Michael Frederick Trench Esq., cousin of the first Earl of Clancarty, who built Heywood, a substantial house in Queen's County in 1773. Besides designing his own house he was the architect of the parish church at Swords, Co. Dublin, and helped to design the Rotunda Assembly Rooms in Dublin. Boswell relates in his *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* that when he jocularly proposed to Dr. Johnson that they should give a number of professorships to their friends in order to encourage 'learning

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'Being informed, indeed, that no high work of art could be procured in Ireland', he obtained models for the figures he required for the great northern and southern fronts of the Custom House from English artists. But he laid most of these aside, for on making inquiries in Dublin he was told of a sculptor named Smyth, with whose models he was so charmed that he entrusted him with the greater part of the statuary. Smyth had already attracted attention by a statue of the celebrated Dr. Lucas—a minor Swift who had fought for the liberties of the Irish Parliament and inveighed against the abuses of the city authorities.¹ This statue, which can still be seen standing in the vestibule of the City Hall, is a queer, tormented figure which does its author little credit, but it was thought highly of at the time and led him on to fortune. It was Smyth who made the colossal figure of Hope which surmounts the cupola of the Custom House, two of the gigantic statues over the southern portico, the bas-relief of the tympanum (on the chief front facing the river) with its elaborate sculpture, the King's Arms that surmount the four angles of the building, and the gigantic carved heads symbolic of the principal rivers of Ireland which form the keystones of the arches. Gandon afterwards remarked of this Irish Phidias (who helped him later to decorate both the Parliament House and the Four Courts) that he had given 'proofs of ability equal to any in the three kingdoms'. Smyth's talent was certainly remarkable, for he had neither the advantage of foreign travel nor the opportunity of studying many works of art.

and taste' in the new University of St. Andrews, he [Boswell] fixed upon the Right Hon. Agmondesham Vesey, Accountant-General of Ireland (who was a member of Johnson's club in London), as Professor of Architecture, 'for,' as he remarks, 'he understood [architecture] well, and has left a very good specimen of his knowledge and taste in that art, by an elegant house built on a plan of his own formation, at Lucan, a few miles from Dublin.'

¹ Dr. Charles Lucas (1713-71), agitator for political and municipal reform, known as 'the Irish Wilkes,' is buried in the graveyard of St. Michan's Church, Dublin. Inscribed on the gravestone are these lines:

*Hibernia's friend, her joy and pride
Her powerful bulwark and her skilful guide,
Firm in the Senate, steady to his trust,
Unmoved by fear, and obstinately just.*

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Gandon's work at the Custom House was not carried on without difficulties. A site that was partly covered by water at high tide was not easy to build upon, while those who had vested interests higher up the river were opposed to an enterprise that threatened to diminish the value of their property. Protesting petitions were received from merchants and members of the Corporation, and hostile demonstrations were made. On one occasion a mob from the Liberties collected on the ground, and the outbreak of riot was feared. The humour of the people, however, fortunately suddenly changed. Instead of filling in the trenches for the foundations, as they had threatened, they amused themselves by swimming in them; there were festivities of various kinds, and a great deal of whisky was drunk. Gandon himself received threatening letters, but he was of Huguenot origin, and did not allow himself to be intimidated. He went on his rounds with a good cane sword: having been, as he tells us, a fine fencer in his youth, he was quite prepared to defend himself 'to the last'. Hitherto none but Dublin masons had been employed in the city, but for the great work of the Custom House, which took ten years to complete at a cost of nearly £300,000, it was found necessary to import English workmen. The Dublin masons and carpenters obliged the newcomers to submit to their 'laws of combination' and to take an oath of secrecy. Frequently strikes for increase of wages ensued, and there was a good deal of drunkenness and disorder.

Gandon also designed the new Four Courts, on Inns Quay, which had been entrusted in the first instance to the Englishman Cooley, who had died in 1784.¹ This is perhaps the most attractive building in Dublin, as it stands in imposing grandeur with its long frontage upon the river and its lordly dome, the whiteness of the façade set off by the red brick of the old Georgian houses which stretch up the Liffey on either side. The reader will find an illustration from Malton facing p. 65, and may take pleasure and comfort in the thought that, although both Four Courts and Custom House were much damaged in the troubles of recent years, the magnifi-

¹ See 'Cooley, Gandon and the Four Courts' by C. P. Curran, *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. lxxix (1949).

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cent exteriors of both have withstood fire and shell and the interiors have been rebuilt.

In addition to the works described Gandon also designed the King's Inns, situated at the upper end of Henrietta Street, an interesting building which marks the birth of the Græco-Roman phase of architecture in Dublin.¹ He also made the alterations carried out in the Parliament House in 1785 and designed Carlisle Bridge, named after an English Viceroy.² By 1808 his health was broken by gout, and he retired to a small estate that he had bought at Lucan, a village near Dublin. In this place, which he calls his 'Tivoli', he spent his days writing a history of Irish architecture and designing villas for gentlemen. Mulvany, who was in revolt against the taste of his own time, wrote of him as follows:

'The perfection of all architectural science is centred in the Grecian temple, . . . but as we cannot always have Parthenons, let our architecture be such as Gandon's, whose chastened taste, whose cultivated judgment, whose sense of beauty, simplicity, and grandeur, so happily protected him from those florid excesses into which even the best of the Romans sometimes fell, but in which their modern imitators so licentiously riot. The noble buildings, with which this great master embellished our metropolis, have rendered his name dear to every Irishman, and will hand it down to the latest posterity as that of the most distinguished architect that Ireland has ever had employed in her service.'

Gandon died in 1824, a comparatively poor man in spite of his labours. He was buried in the grave of Francis Grose,

¹ The King's Inns in Henrietta Street were built between 1795 and 1798, additions being made later. The old King's Inns were on Inns Quay, the site being utilized by the Government for the Four Courts.

² Carlisle Bridge, necessitated by the building of the new Custom House (the old Custom House stood just below Essex Bridge), was built between 1791 and 1794. In 1880 it was demolished and the present fine, broad bridge known as O'Connell Bridge was erected in its place. A little later an ugly railway viaduct was erected over the Liffey, near the Custom House, thus destroying the view of Gandon's masterpiece. An elegant iron bridge, known as The Metal Bridge, was opened for foot passengers in 1816. It is close to O'Connell Bridge, a little farther up the river.

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the antiquary, which is marked by a granite stone in Drumcondra churchyard, near Dublin. Grose died, we read, 'whilst in chearful conversation with his friends,' on 8th May 1791. Underneath the inscription is written:

ALSO HIS FRIEND
JAMES GANDON
ARCHITECT
BORN IN 1742—DIED 1824

One would naturally expect to find some reference upon this stone to the outstanding services that Gandon rendered to Ireland, the country of his adoption. The silence of his contemporaries may be accounted for by the fact that the classical school of architecture to which he belonged was no longer in fashion. But one may also hazard the guess that their chilly neglect was more probably due to his having outlived his age—he had been patronized by the Old Ascendancy.¹

The building of Carlisle Bridge, which has already been referred to, was carried out under the auspices of the Wide Street Commissioners, who did credit to their city by improving and beautifying it. This body of men, which originally included the Lord Mayor and the Speaker of the House of Commons, was first appointed by an Act of the Irish Parliament in 1757, and they continued to act as a body until 1841, when their property was vested in the Corporation. They were permitted to raise duties for the expenses of their work on the sale of coal and cards, and on club-houses in Dublin, but most of their funds were provided by the Irish Parliament. In the reports that they issued from time to time they show us the necessity for their task. Many houses that had once been occupied by wealthy owners had already fallen into decay, and there were numbers of terribly congested areas. Some of the streets were so narrow that it was impossible for two carriages to pass, and as night fell they became dangerous to pedestrians. Gilbert relates in his

¹ In 1939, its centenary year, the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland placed a tablet to Gandon's memory on the wall of the church. See Maurice Craig's *Dublin* (1952), chapter xxi (good drawings).

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History of Dublin how persons passing Cork Hill after dark were frequently insulted and maltreated by the numerous chairmen who hung round the taverns, and how the waiters of these establishments supported the loafers in their battles by pouring pails of dirty water upon their victims. The newspapers of the time are full of accounts of people who were robbed and wounded in the dark, not even the occupants of coaches protected by footmen being free from violence. The Commissioners opened Parliament Street between the Castle and the river, and widened Dame Street and Nassau Street. They cleared the site for the Royal Exchange in 1767, and removed a number of squalid dwellings from the quays and neighbourhood of the cathedrals. They also laid out Lower Sackville Street and Westmorland Street to make a continuous thoroughfare to the river, which was crossed at Carlisle Bridge. This improvement changed the centre of gravity of the town. The importance of Capel Street and Essex Street grew less. The trend of development followed the new line of traffic from north to south, instead of from east to west.

Similar Commissioners for Paving and Lighting were appointed in 1806. They repaired the streets, strengthened the footways, and improved sanitary conditions by constructing covered sewers. Before the Union the paving and lighting of Dublin were much complained of by strangers, but by the end of the Georgian period a great improvement had taken place. 'No city in Europe,' we learn from a popular guide-book published in 1821, 'can boast of better pavement or more commodious flagged way, while it is well lighted by 6,000 lamps, distributed in the most judicious manner over every part of the city'.

Of the private houses built during the Georgian period in Dublin Leinster House, now the seat of the Free State Parliament, was chief. It was built by Cassels as a town house for the Earl of Kildare, who became Duke of Leinster in 1766. Malton describes it as 'the most stately private edifice in the city, . . . enjoying in the tumult of a noisy metropolis all the retirement of the country'. The building, two storeys high, was of stone, in the form of a rectangle, 140 feet long by 70 feet deep. The extensive front of more than 210 feet includ-

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ing the Doric colonnades, before which was a spacious courtyard bounded by walls and a gate, looked out on Kildare Street. At the back of the house was a garden, and a lawn of considerable size; these gave to the place its rustic character. Having given a full account of the imposing exterior of this mansion, Malton goes on to describe the interior—the lofty hall, the great dining-parlour overlooking the lawn, the supper-room ‘adorned with sixteen fluted Ionic columns’, the picture gallery ‘containing many fine paintings by the first masters’, the elegant furniture, and the elaborate stucco-work. The first proprietor of the house was married to Emily Mary Lennox, daughter of the Duke of Richmond. She was one of the celebrated beauties of the day, and was painted by Reynolds. Kildare was a very popular character because he resisted the pleasures of London and Bath and chose to live mainly in Ireland. He also took, in accordance with the traditions of his family, the national side in politics.¹ On his death in 1773 the house passed to his son, the second Duke of Leinster, who was even more popular than his father, for he was Colonel of the first Dublin regiment of Volunteers, who were frequently drilled on his lawn. In the house itself many lavish entertainments were given at which the Lord-Lieutenant and every one of importance were present. The Duke’s brother, the ill-fated Lord Edward Fitzgerald, occasionally resided here when a member of the Irish Parliament. But this young idealist hated large houses, and really preferred the country. ‘I confess,’ he wrote to his mother in 1794, ‘Leinster House does not inspire the brightest ideas. By the by, what a melancholy house it is. You cannot conceive how much it appeared so when first we came from Kildare; but it is going off a little. A poor country housemaid I brought with me cried for two days, and said she thought she was in a prison.’ Lord Edward’s mother was an admirer of Rousseau, and at one time, according to Mrs.

¹ Lord Kildare came into prominence by presenting a memorial to the King setting forth the grievances of Ireland, and protesting against the arbitrary ways of Archbishop Stone, who had arrogated to himself the entire government of the country. Kildare criticized the right put forward by the Ministry to dispose of the annual surplus in the Irish Exchequer.

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Delany, thought of offering the Frenchman a retreat in return for the education of her children. Did she contemplate confining that petulant spirit in Leinster House? The idea has its comic aspect.

Cassels (or Castle), the German architect of this piece of architectural grandeur which failed to win Lord Edward's affection, deserves a word of mention. He was originally invited to Ireland by Sir Gustavus Hume to rebuild his country place in Fermanagh. He soon moved to Dublin, and became the fashionable architect of the day. He built Tyrone House in Marlborough Street for Sir Marcus Beresford, later Earl of Tyrone. He was the designer of the Lying-in Hospital, and of the Printing House and Dining Hall in Trinity College. He was very popular with the Irish nobility and gentry, not only on account of his professional abilities, but because he was an exceptionally agreeable dinner companion. He died suddenly in 1751 at Carton, the Duke of Leinster's magnificent house in Kildare (which he was engaged in redecorating). Cassels was extremely fond of the bottle, and spent most of his evenings in taverns. The tale that he died of a fit brought on by his drinking may very well be true.

Charlemont House, in Rutland (now Parnell) Square, though much smaller and less pretentious than the Kildare mansion in Molesworth Fields, has more interesting associations. It has been described as the 'Holland House of Dublin', for Lord Charlemont was the leader of intellectual society in Ireland.¹ The house, three storeys high, with five windows in a range extending to sixty feet, was built of brick faced with granite, and stood slightly back from the street with a courtyard in front. It was designed by Lord Charlemont, assisted by Sir William Chambers, whose letters are preserved for us in the *Charlemont Manuscripts*. Lord Charlemont's replies show the keen interest he took in the architectural details of this house and of his charming Casino in the grounds of his villa Marino, at Clontarf, which was designed entirely by

¹ Lord Charlemont lived at 14 Jervis Street (where the Charitable Infirmary was transferred from Inns Quay in 1786) before he built Charlemont House.

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Chambers.¹ Among numerous other apartments Charlemont House contained a famous library adorned with statues and busts—'a noble apartment', according to Malton, 'where every object useful or decorative unites learning with taste and convenience'. Another room is described as a cabinet for pictures and antiquities, while yet another formed a repository for medals and bas-reliefs. All visitors of consequence to Dublin had introductions to Lord Charlemont,² and greatly admired these treasures, which had been acquired by his Lordship while making the Grand Tour. Francis, the second Earl of Charlemont, succeeded his father in 1799, and kept up Charlemont House with its traditions as a resort of distinguished company till his death in 1863. The house then went to his nephew, the third Earl, who sold it to the Government. It has lately been turned into a Municipal

¹ The Casino, built in 1761 or 1762, is described in Thomas Milton's *Collection of Select Views from the Different Seats of the Nobility and Gentry in Ireland* (1783-93) as follows: "The inside disposition is that of a dwelling house on a very small scale perfectly adapted to the purpose intended; not family accommodation, but solitude and retirement. There is a Vestibule, Saloon, Boudoir, and Closet for books. There are in the attic four chambers for beds; and under the principal floor a kitchen and offices for servants, which receive light from an area surrounding the building. . . . It may be justly esteemed a *chef d'œuvre* in architecture; such as might be expected from a patron of Lord Charlemont's taste, and from the genius of Sir William Chambers.' Milton also states that a brass plate was fixed in the first stone of the Casino with the date engraved, and an inscription importing that this building was erected as a testimony of gratitude to public and private virtue during the administration of William Pitt 'when the glory of the British Empire arrived at its highest pitch.' This beautiful little building has been recently restored by the Irish Commissioners of Public Works, and is now open for public inspection.

² 'Every foreigner, of taste congenial to his own, and every Englishman of rank and talents, visited Lord Charlemont during their occasional residence in Dublin. . . . Mr. Burke once said to me of this accomplished nobleman: "Lord Charlemont is a man of such polished manners, of a mind so truly adorned, and disposed to the adoption of whatever is excellent and praiseworthy, that, to see and converse with him, would alone induce me, or might induce anyone who relished such qualities, to pay a visit to Dublin."' Francis Hardy, *Memoirs of the Earl of Charlemont* (1810), p. 295. See page 301.

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Gallery of Modern Art. The outside has been restored, but the old interior has been removed.

Of the more magnificent eighteenth century houses in Dublin, Tyrone House¹ (1741), in Marlborough Street, Powerscourt House² (1771), in William Street, and the Provost's House adjoining the University were the chief. Francis Andrews, Provost of Trinity, a man of taste and fashion, wished to have a house that would be worthy of the great new front of the college that was building in 1759. The mansion that he built (1760) is supposed to have been modelled on one erected for General Wade in Piccadilly by Lord Burlington. It was designed by an Irish architect, and it cost £11,000. The outside, with its solid centre and wings divided from the street by a stone wall and iron gateway, is more dignified than beautiful. The interior, however, especially the drawing-room, with its solid pillars and elaborate stucco-work, is elegantly decorated. The Provost's House, apart from its architectural adornment and valuable pictures, is interesting as being one of the very few Dublin mansions of the period that are still used for their original purpose. Northland House (1769), in Dawson Street, Belvedere House (1775), in Great Denmark Street, Clonmell House (1784), in Harcourt Street, Aldborough House (1793), in North Strand—these are other fine mansions of the time, all built for wealthy and aristocratic patrons.³

The Governors of the Lying-in Hospital having been granted a duty on private sedan chairs, for the benefit of the funds of the hospital,⁴ a book was published in Dublin in

¹ Tyrone House was built by the architect Richard Cassels, for Sir Marcus Beresford, who became Earl of Tyrone in 1746.

² Powerscourt House was built by Robert Mack (probably a builder rather than an architect) for Richard, third Viscount Powerscourt. It was sold by Richard, fourth Viscount Powerscourt, to the Government in 1807 for £15,000. Between 1811 and 1832 it was used by the Commissioners of Stamp Duties, and later was sold to the firm of Ferrier and Pollock, wholesale warehousemen.

³ See the papers on 'Old Dublin Mansion-houses: their Lordly Occupiers in the Last Century' in *The Irish Builder*, vols. xxxv, xxxvi, and xxxvii.

⁴ So much was borrowed on debentures at 4 per cent chargeable on the chair tax. The tax brought in about £450 a year to the hospital.

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1787 giving a list of the people who owned these luxuries. This rare small octavo volume is useful, because in furnishing the addresses of proprietors of chairs it throws a light on fashionable residences. The town houses of the nobility and gentry of Ireland at this time were scattered all over the city. On the north side we find them mostly in Rutland Square, Henrietta Street, Frederick Street, Capel Street, Arran Quay, and Sackville Street. On the south side Grafton Street, Nassau Street, Dawson Street, Hume Street, Kildare Street, Molesworth Street, Merrion Street and Merrion Square, Harcourt Street, Ely Place, and St. Stephen's Green were chiefly patronized.¹

Of the streets mentioned Henrietta Street, said to have been named after the wife of Charles, Duke of Grafton, who was Lord-Lieutenant early in the century, was perhaps the most exclusive. Here between 1725 and 1794 lived four successive Primates, one of these being the powerful Archbishop Stone, who entertained, as Cumberland says in his *Memoirs*, with 'Polish magnificence'. The Earls of Kingston and Thomond also lived in this street—as well as Luke Gardiner and his son, who became Earl of Blessington in 1816. On the south side of the town the houses surrounding St. Stephen's Green were certainly the largest and most magnificent. Here at one time lived the Earls of Leitrim, Belmore, Kilkenny, Ross, and Meath, the Right Hon. Peter La Touche, Grattan, Curran, and other celebrities, including Robert Clayton, Bishop of Killala.

In 1731 Mrs. Delany, then Mrs. Pendarves,² paid a long visit to her friends the Claytons in their house in St. Stephen's Green. She was the niece of Lord Lansdowne, used to good society and elegant surroundings, and may be supposed to

¹ Between 1790 and 1796 of the Irish nobility that kept town houses in Dublin twelve peers lived in St. Stephen's Green, nine in Sackville Street, seven in Merrion Street, seven in Kildare Street, seven in Henrietta Street, eleven in Rutland Square, three in Grafton Street, and two in Henry Street.

² Mary Granville (1700-88) was married to Alexander Pendarves of Roscrow, Cornwall, in 1718; her second husband was Dr. Patrick Delany, the friend of Sheridan and Swift. She married him in 1743. Her first visit to Ireland extended from September 1731 to April 1733. See S. Dewes, *Mrs. Delany* (1940).

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have been a connoisseur in houses. Having compared the front of the mansion in which she found herself to Devonshire House (in a letter to her sister in England) she goes on to describe it in more detail:

‘The apartments are handsome, and furnished with gold-coloured damask, virtùs and busts and pictures that the Bishop brought with him from Italy. . . . First there is a very good hall well filled with servants; then a room of 18 feet square wainscoted with oak, the panels all carved, and the doors and chimney [pieces] finished with very high carving. The ceiling stucco, the window-curtains and chairs yellow Genoa damask; portraits and landscapes very well done round the room, marble tables between the windows, and looking-glasses with gilt frames. The next room is 28 feet long and 22 broad, and is as finely adorned as damask, pictures and busts can make it; besides the floor being entirely covered with the finest Persian carpet that ever was seen. The bedchamber is large and handsome—all furnished with the same damask.’

Mrs. Clayton, the Bishop’s wife, was one of the most fashionable people in Dublin. She gave splendid entertainments at this house, and from Mrs. Delany’s account appears to have lived in a perpetual whirl of amusements. She was very fond of show. Her coach, drawn by six powerful Flanders mares, surpassed those of all her neighbours, including that of the Lord-Lieutenant himself. The house, which was built about 1730, and designed by Cassels, once formed part of Lord Iveagh’s mansion—one of the most imposing in Dublin.¹ For the Green itself Mrs. Delany has nothing but praise. ‘I think’, she wrote, ‘it may be preferred justly to any square in London.’ She used to walk round it several times every day for the sake of her health—a pleasing relief no doubt from a surfeit of parties and balls.

Moira House, on the south quays, built in 1752 by Sir John Rawdon (later Earl of Moira), was also the scene of much entertaining. Lord Moira had lived for many years in England, where he was a member of the Court of George II,

¹ Iveagh House has recently been presented to the Irish Government for official purposes.

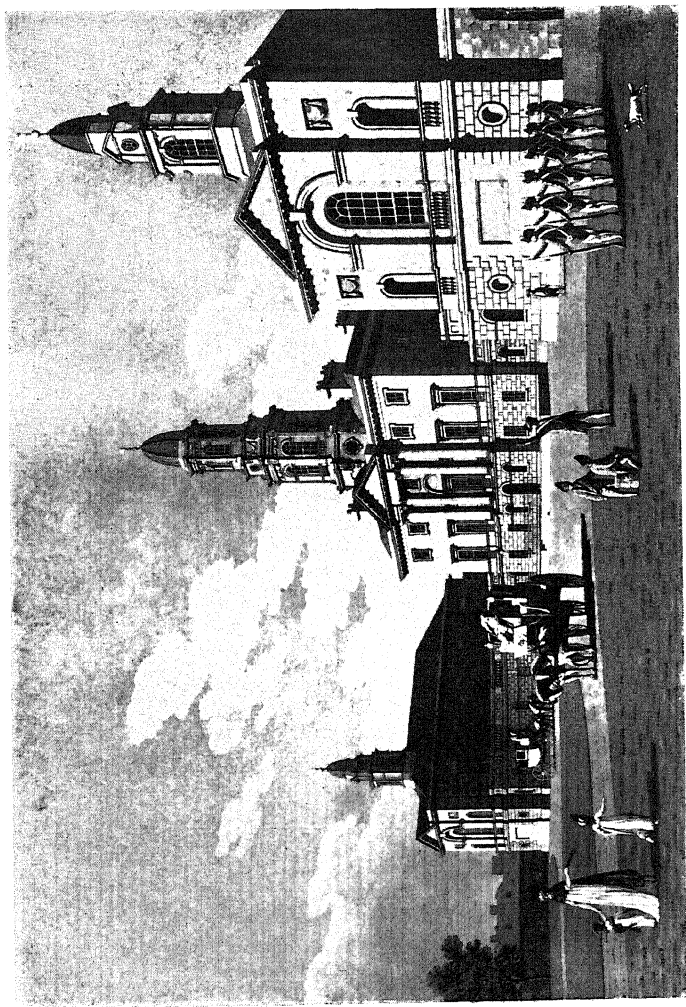
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and 'to his last hour', according to Hardy, biographer of Lord Charlemont, 'retained the agreeable manners of that society.' His wife, who was the daughter of the Earl of Huntingdon, was a woman of great charm and intelligence. We are not surprised therefore to learn (also from Hardy) that their house was for many years 'the seat of refined hospitality, of good nature, and good conversation'. In 1775 Wesley paid a visit here. 'I waited on Lady Moira,' he says, 'and was surprised to observe, though not a more grand, yet a far more elegant room than any I ever saw in England. It was an octagon, about 20 feet square and 15 or 16 high having one window, the sides of it inlaid throughout with mother-of-pearl reaching from the top of the room to the bottom; the ceiling, sides and furniture of the room were equally elegant.' The first Earl died in 1793, and the house then passed to his son, later the Marquis of Hastings.¹ On his death in 1826 it became a Mendicity Institution, and was shorn of its top storey, decorations, and garden. No one would guess from its present bleak aspect that it was once a lively scene. Here Grattan and Fox first met and conversed. Here Lord Edward Fitzgerald and his sprightly Pamela were frequently welcome guests.²

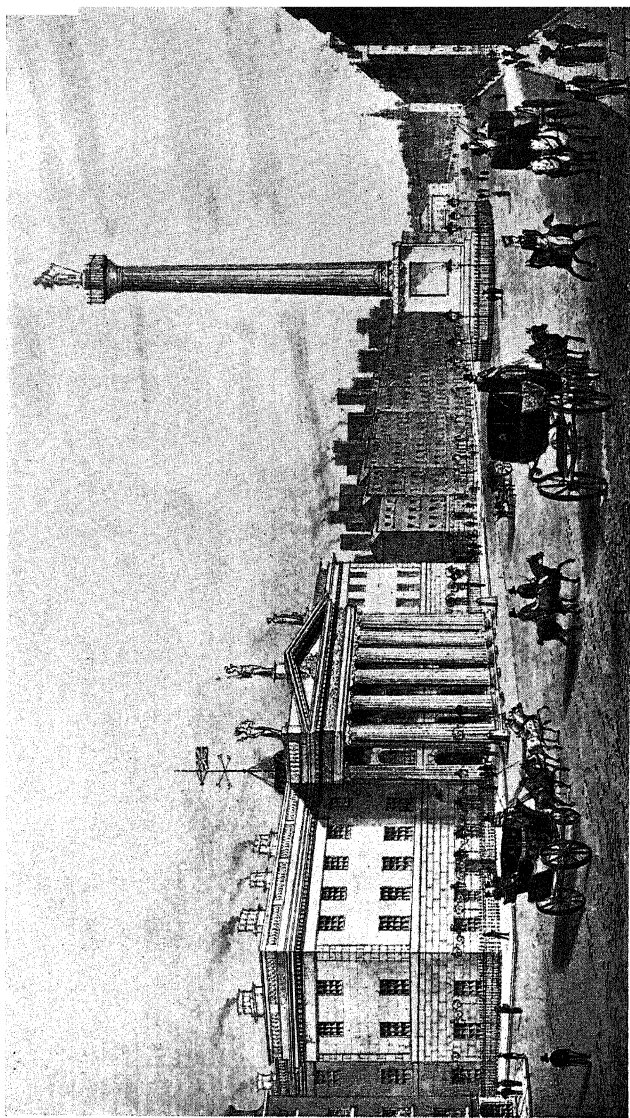
The Earl of Moira's mansion was one of the largest in Dublin. The reader may now like to look into the drawing-room of a smaller house, for, though the scene is laid at the time of the Union, the room was still preserved in the dress of the eighteenth century. In 1800 the old Dowager Lady Steele died at her town residence in Dominick Street. When young she had been a belle at Lord Chesterfield's Court while he was Viceroy of Ireland in 1745-6. In her old age she was noted as a character and wit, although she had become something of a recluse. When her daughter, Mrs. Featherstone, of Bracklyn Castle, County Meath, came up to Dublin to dispose of her mother's house and its contents, she brought with her young Sydney Owenson, who afterwards became Lady Morgan. Lady Morgan describes for us

¹ The second Earl of Moira (Marquis of Hastings) was appointed Governor-General of Bengal in 1813.

² A paragraph in the newspapers announced recently that a large part of Moira House is to be pulled down.



THE BLUE-COAT SCHOOL OR KING'S HOSPITAL, DUBLIN
From James Malton's *Picturesque and Descriptive View of the City of Dublin* (1792-99)



SACKVILLE STREET, DUBLIN, SHOWING THE GENERAL POST OFFICE AND NELSON'S COLUMN

From a watercolour drawing by Samuel Frederick Brocas (1818)

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the old lady's best drawing-room as it met the eye after having lain derelict for some considerable period. 'On opening the doors', we learn, 'there was a rent in the tapestry of cobwebs which was quite suffocating.' The first objects that attracted attention were the curtains, of rich crimson satin damask heavily lined and wadded and finished at the bottom with leaded weights to regulate their rise and fall. On the first attempt to move them a crimson silk stocking filled with money fell down from the cornice, which gave the room and its contents an added interest. There was a beautiful marble chimneypiece finely sculptured, which reached half-way to the ceiling. This was proudly surmounted with a range of Etruscan vases. Round the walls were ponderous chairs and settees, known as 'sofas' in Lady's Morgan day, and with these were intermingled cabinets whose shapes were indistinguishable owing to the dust with which they were covered. A large table stood in the middle of the room, upon which were a number of folio volumes. Chinese paper hung on the walls, and a thick Turkey carpet covered the floor. The room had no other decoration but some large brackets placed here and there to hold candles. The Featherstone family promptly replaced all this antique splendour by the style of furniture then in vogue, which was ordered from the most fashionable upholsterer in Dublin. Lemon-coloured calico hangings, highly glazed, with dark chintz borders, were fixed round the walls. The Etruscan vases from the chimneypiece were removed, and replaced by Derbyshire spar, and pier-tables painted and gilded were purchased. Under the mirrors were placed tables covered with fligree ornaments. Although Lady Morgan obligingly painted these objects herself, she did not approve of the change, which, as she remarks, showed 'the result of the frippery influence of Carlton House on the taste of the day'. She derived more pleasure in fact from the discovery in the attic of a coffer full of old papers which were actually found to include letters of Pope and Swift.

Dominick Street is one of the most fascinating Georgian streets in Dublin, but it no longer retains its former elegance, for it has fallen sadly into neglect. The tide of fashion, which moved southward shortly before the Union, has left it high

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and dry. The old houses are in a state of decay, and are let in squalid and dismal tenements.¹

In the early part of the eighteenth century the Dublin houses were mostly of the gabled variety with simple doorways, and high slender windows.² Inside, narrow entrance passages led to plain but solid staircases, and rooms without stucco lined with wooden wainscoting.³ The fireplaces were often to be found in the angle positions introduced into England in Charles II's time, while the windows were usually level with the wall surfaces. As time went on most of these houses were pulled down, or their fronts altered and their gables removed. A few of them can still be seen in their original condition, however, especially in the old weaving district known as the Coombe, where many Huguenot weavers who had emigrated from France and Holland settled at the end of the seventeenth century.

By the second half of the eighteenth century great houses such as Leinster House and Tyrone House had set the fashion in the classical style of architecture, and the smaller houses were built with solidly decorated door fronts. Gables and attics were replaced by parapets. The interiors had now become more elaborate. Stone staircases with wrought-iron balustrades had in some cases taken the place of wooden ones. Windows were set more deeply in the walls, and rooms, halls, and passages were often elaborately decorated with stucco. The Dublin houses of this period are, indeed, noted for their modelled plasterwork. This seems, as in England, to have been introduced by Italian artists. There were two brothers, Paul and Philip Franchini, who were engaged on stucco-work in Ireland. In 1739 they were employed on a ceiling at Carton designed by Cassels for the Earl of Kildare;

¹ This and similarly congested areas in Dublin are doomed, for the Corporation has an extensive plan for slum-clearance and rehousing which is gradually being put into operation.

² There are photographs of the old gabled houses of Dublin in the first volume of the Georgian Society's publications (1909). Also in Maurice Craig's book on *Dublin* (1952).

³ The beautiful plaster work of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods in England is almost absent from Dublin. The only important example is the ceiling of the chapel of the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham.

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and it is said to have been they who (under the direction of a French artist named Cremillion) modelled the elaborate ceiling of the chapel of the Rotunda Hospital, which is the finest stucco-work in Dublin. In England these two brothers had already been engaged on the ceiling of St. Mary's Chapel, in Queen's Square, Bath¹; and they may also have been employed in London. Their style was soon copied by Dublin workmen, some of whom were not slavish imitators but real artists, original in their designs. Ornamentation in high relief representing birds, masonic symbols, cornucopias, and other objects of a distinctive character is, it is said, peculiar to Dublin houses. Some people have the idea that all the stucco-work to be found in Dublin was executed by Italians. That this was not so can be proved definitely in some cases. The pay-sheets for the work done on the beautiful ceiling of the board-room of the Blue-coat School, for example, all show the names of Irish workmen.

As time went on and the rococo period was reached plaster-work lost its simplicity and restraint and became more elaborate and flowing.² For instance, in the house built for Thomas Rochford, second Earl of Belvedere, in Great Denmark Street in 1775 (now a Jesuit College) the stucco-work on the grand staircase and in the large reception rooms, beautifully executed, is so rich that it gives a sense of discomfort. While admiring the energy of the artist, one cannot help feeling that a simpler design would have been more in keeping with the severity and formality of the architecture.

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, in Ireland as in England, there came a revolution in taste. The older classical forms once more revived, and a restrained style under the influence of the brothers Adam was adopted. When plaster decoration was at the height of its development it was done by the thumb with the aid of a wooden

¹ This chapel, with its beautiful ceiling (opened on 25th December 1734), was demolished in 1874. There is a short street in Bath known as Chapel Street, which is approximately on the site. See A. M. Green, *The Eighteenth Century Architecture of Bath* (1904).

² There is an excellent article on 'Dublin Plaster Work' by C. P. Curran in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. lxx (1940), pp. 1-56.

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instrument, but later when the designs became more symmetrical the art of casting was invented. Free modelling disappeared, and with it the artist plasterer. The change in taste can be seen in the ceilings of Powerscourt House, where the stucco on the ground floor is of the rococo period while that on the first floor is Adam. The expensive redecoration that was carried out in the great drawing-room in Leinster House (possibly designed by Chambers) also shows the trend of the new fashion. The growing taste for pictures is said to have been another factor in the decline of stucco. Most Irishmen of consequence had made the Grand Tour, and if they had not originals had many fine copies. They naturally wished to set off these to the best advantage—that is to say, in as simple surroundings as possible. Taste, in any case, became more severe with the advent of the French Revolution, when the natural lustre of aristocracies in all countries was dimmed, and there were other things to think of than the building and decoration of houses. The Adam brothers never actually visited Ireland, but there is plenty of work in Dublin that shows their influence. Ely House (c. 1772), for instance, with its beautiful wrought-iron staircase, mahogany doors, silver handles and lock-plates, carved chimneypieces, and walls decorated with stucco, is obviously inspired by their taste. There are not many painted rooms in Dublin, but there are a few.¹ Coloured medallions were occasionally inserted in walls, and there are some ceilings by Angelica Kauffmann.²

A large number of the chimneypieces in Dublin houses were as noteworthy as the stucco-work. One is often surprised to find remarkably fine specimens in dwellings of moderate size. A great many have now been removed from their original setting, and have found their way over to

¹ For example, in 41 North Great George's Street, (b. 1786) subsequently Kenmare College (see *Records of the Georgian Society*, vol. i, 1909), the walls of the drawing-room were painted with views of the Italian coast seen between the pillars of a loggia.

² Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), historical and portrait painter, was of Swiss extraction. Having studied at Florence and Rome and met influential English people in Naples and Venice, she became a fashionable portrait painter in London, though she left England in 1781, and spent the rest of her life in Rome. She visited Ireland in 1771.

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England or America, where they have fetched high prices. Some of the most beautiful of these chimneypieces were made by the Italian Bossi, who was working in Dublin from 1785 to 1798. His method, which was well known in Italy, but the secret of which he carefully guarded in Ireland, was to lay patterns of coloured marble on white. The designs on his chimneypieces are simple but decorative, the colourings delicate and rare.

Those who wander through the old Georgian streets and squares of the Irish capital will observe a good deal of fine ironwork—railings and lamp-arches, bell-pulls and lanterns—much of which has unfortunately been allowed to fall into decay. The elegant fanlights with their grilles, said to have been put in originally as a protection against thieves, are also worthy of notice. Many of these date from the latter half of the eighteenth century. They are wrought in carved stone, metal, or worked plaster, and are often decorated in Adam character.

The outsides of Dublin houses belonging to this period are generally severe and plain, the variety, where it exists, being noticeable in the doorways, which often show considerable artistry. Most of the residences are of brick of a pleasing claret or light red colour. Some few are of stone quarried from the mountains close by, while a few are faced with granite to the first storey only (as in Merrion Square, for instance) by way of compromise. No one would suspect from an inspection of these Dublin exteriors that the insides were richly decorated, or be able to form a just estimate of the size of the interiors. The square halls, where chairmen waited for their patrons above stairs, are often extremely capacious, and the drawing-rooms designed for the frequent assemblies of the period remarkably large. As in most Georgian houses, the bedrooms were small and not very numerous. No one troubled to decorate them, for they were used largely by servants. Even moderately sized dwellings seem to have been equipped with from ten to fifteen domestics, and one wonders how such a numerous staff was housed. Servants doubtless slept in the dark but spacious basements, as well as in upper storeys and attics; the footmen had probably to be content with mattresses—laid down, one suspects, in the hall.

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It is a pity that so many of the Georgian houses in Dublin have been allowed to deteriorate into tenements. One feels that something could have been done (despite the exodus into the suburbs) to keep them in a better state of preservation. In the poorer neighbourhoods one can catch glimpses through open doors of beautifully proportioned staircases, windows, and arches, in what were once dignified private residences. Should the stranger prefer less haphazard methods of sightseeing there are still many noteworthy eighteenth-century houses in a good state of repair that are used either as offices or retained as residences. These are generally easy to view. Most Dublin householders (unfortunately not all) take a pride in their Georgian inheritance. They are singularly courteous, and very willing to admit strangers.

In 1908 a number of cultivated people in Dublin, among whom the late Sir John Mahaffy¹ was chief, regretting the fact that so many of the choicest of the eighteenth-century houses were disappearing or falling into decay, formed a society known as the Georgian Society to carry out a survey and secure a permanent record of the most noteworthy. Drawings and photographs were made both of the exteriors and of decorative details within, and these were embodied in a set of handsome volumes subsequently published by the society. The reader who desires to know more of Georgian architecture in Dublin than is told in this book is advised to examine the illustrations in these volumes, popularly known as the 'Georgian Books'.² Admirable notes and essays by Sir John Mahaffy, Mr. Strickland, and others are included, which will always be of the greatest assistance to students of eighteenth-century Dublin. A supplementary volume added to the series is devoted to the country mansions of the period.

¹ Sir John P. Mahaffy (1839-1919) was author of *Rambles and Studies in Greece*, *Greek Social Life from Homer to Menander*, and other works on Greek literature and history. He was President of the Royal Irish Academy, 1911-16, and Provost of Trinity College, 1914-19. There is a notice of him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, 1912-21.

² The photography in the Georgian Books is not always first class. The reader should consult the books of Maurice Craig and John Harvey on Dublin (see Bibliography) for good illustrations.

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Although the history of these is outside the scope of this work, the fact that there were several splendid houses in the neighbourhood of Dublin, as well as a considerable number of gentlemen's seats, should be of interest to English readers. Carton, the magnificent mansion of the Duke of Leinster in County Kildare, has already been mentioned. Castletown, in the same neighbourhood, built by the Right Hon. William Conolly, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, is the largest country house in Ireland.¹ Frescati, at Blackrock, built for Hely-Hutchinson, Provost of Trinity College, Lucan House, Santry Court, and many others might be mentioned.

Despite the numerous concessions made to the Catholic majority from time to time, Dublin remained the stronghold of the Protestant Ascendancy until the end of the Georgian period. This was reflected nowhere with more accuracy than in the character of the Corporation. They were constantly passing resolutions of loyalty to the King and Viceroy. They offered rewards to persons informing against the United Irishmen. They even petitioned against Catholic Emancipation. The original privileges of the freemen of the city, gained under the old charters, gradually disappeared, and the municipal government was gathered into the hands of the Lord Mayor and a few aldermen—the whole body being in subservience to the Castle. Municipal business was carried on at the Tholsel,² a massive building erected in the seventeenth century in Skinner's Row (now Christchurch Place). Here quarter sessions were held, libellous publications were burned, and criminals placed in the stocks. At the Tholsel

¹ The Right Hon. William Conolly was elected Speaker of the Irish House of Commons in 1715. For Castletown House, see my *Country and Town in Ireland under the Georges*, pp. 74–8. In the Bibliography of this book will also be found references to the various excellent articles (with illustrations) on Irish country houses which have appeared from time to time in *Country Life*, by Mr. Christopher Hussey and others.

² The original Dublin Tholsel (Toll-gatherer's stall), the Guildhall of the Corporation of Dublin, was built in the reign of Edward II. It was rebuilt (in Skinner's Row) in 1683 and 1783, and, being in a state of decay, was pulled down in 1809. A new Session House was built in Green Street in 1797, and meetings of the Corporation were transferred to William Street.

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also public banquets took place. On specially festive occasions the building was illuminated, and ale was served out to the populace. The Lord Mayor himself resided in the Mansion House, in Dawson Street, a plain brick mansion built early in the eighteenth century.¹ This dignified house is shown in the series of illustrations which decorate the borders of the map of Dublin published by Brooking in 1728. But it is now hardly recognizable, disguised as it is by ugly modern additions which include an ornate porch and a painted façade. There do not seem to have been many outstanding Lord Mayors during the period. The Dublin Corporation was not really a very influential body, nor was it remarkable for its efficiency. It had the sense to perceive the disadvantages of the commercial restrictions imposed by England however, and voted courageously against the Union.

The Castle has been referred to, and it was of course this influence that prevailed. The spirit of the Ascendancy was embodied in the equestrian statue of King William III which stood upon a pedestal surrounded by a railing on College Green.² This flaunting symbol, which was ordered by the Corporation from Grinling Gibbons shortly after the Battle of the Boyne, may be called, indeed, the presiding genius of the city. On November 4th, the anniversary of the King's birthday, elaborate celebrations in his honour were held. The Viceroy and the Lord Mayor, accompanied by their respective trains, went in procession through the city. The streets were decked out in orange ribbons, and a grand parade was held round the statue. The troops were called out, loud volleys were fired, and inspiring martial music was played. Mrs. Delany described this spectacle in a letter

¹ The Mansion House was built as a private house by Josiah Dawson in 1710, and was purchased by the City as a residence for the Lord Mayor in 1715. The Round Room was erected at the rear of the building at the expense of the Corporation of Dublin in 1821 for the purpose of entertaining George IV on his visit to Dublin.

² A print of this famous statue, unveiled on 1st July 1701 the anniversary of the Boyne, and continuously mutilated and daubed with paint, is reproduced in R. Pool and J. Cash's *Views of the most remarkable Public Buildings, Monuments and other Edifices in the city of Dublin* (1780). It was destroyed during recent political troubles.

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written from Dublin to her sister in 1751. She makes the remark that the memory of King William is 'idolized here almost to superstition'. This extraordinary enthusiasm, together with its peculiar mode of expression, must have struck an Englishwoman as strange, but she seems to have been pleased and amused with the novelty and the entertainment that it provided.

Between the formation of the Orange Association in 1795 and the Rebellion of 1798 the enthusiasm for the victor of the Boyne appears to have reached fever-heat. On festive occasions the statue was decorated with lilies and orange ribbons, and wore a flaming cloak and sash. The railings around were painted to match, and all who passed by were required to show reverence by removing their hats. Those who were not admirers of 'King Billy', or of the state of affairs for which he was held responsible, took every opportunity of showing him disrespect. In the course of the century both he and his horse were frequently painted or daubed with pitch, and on one occasion at least an attempt was made to cut off the King's head. The annual parades and processions were continued until 1822, after which they were stopped, for there was a serious riot in that year, in which many people were hurt. Catholic Emancipation, in any case, was near, and so was the end of the Protestant Ascendancy. One night a few years ago both the King and his horse were blown up—an unnecessary piece of violence. There are few striking statues in Dublin, and one may regret the loss of this one. It was an interesting relic of the past, and had a gay, prancing appearance.

'You who were here so lately would scarcely know the city, so much is it improved, so rapidly is it continuing to improve. After the talk of the misery of the people in our Parliament, and in the Parliament here, I cannot but feel daily astonishment at the nobleness of the new buildings and the spacious improvements hourly making in the streets. I am sometimes tempted to suspect appearances, and to think I am at table with a man who gives me Burgundy, but whose attendant is a bailiff disguised in livery. In a word, there never was so splendid a metropolis for so poor a country.'

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This passage, which occurs in a letter written by an Englishman from Dublin in 1785 to William Eden (later Lord Auckland), the Lord Treasurer of Ireland, expresses the astonishment felt by most of his fellow-countrymen at the extraordinary growth of the city at this time. Ireland, in fact, was not the poverty-stricken country that she was often supposed to be. She had, it is true, been the victim of the Mercantile System, and her woollen industry and cattle trade had been destroyed, but this does not mean, as has already been pointed out, that she had no commerce or prosperity. On the contrary, as the century progressed she developed a flourishing provision trade and a considerable linen industry. In 1703 the Irish exports as a whole were valued at £572,000. In 1788 they exceeded three million pounds. Lord Sheffield expressed his opinion in 1785 that 'the Kingdom in general is in the most prosperous state, and has, perhaps, been progressively more so than any country in Europe during the greater part of a century'. And Lord Chancellor Clare, speaking of the interval of Irish independence under Grattan's Parliament, asserted that 'there is not a nation on the habitable globe which has advanced in cultivation and commerce, in agriculture, and in manufactures, with the same rapidity in the same period.'¹ The increase of commerce naturally became more rapid after Free Trade was granted by England in 1782; and it is precisely at this time that there was the most activity in building. The Irish Parliament had plenty of money at its command, and was determined that its dominating neighbour should not have the use of it. Having failed to establish its authority over the surplus in 1753, it had taken care that henceforth no surplus should exist, and money was spent lavishly on local improvement—roads and canals, manufactures, and building.

¹ 'Can those who now hear me deny that since the period of 1782 this country has risen in civilization, wealth, and manufacture, until interrupted by the present war, in a greater proportion and with a more rapid progress than any other country in Europe, and much more than it ever did itself in a like period before?' Foster's 'Speech on the Union' quoted in Lecky's *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. V, p. 389. See also a speech made by Grattan: Grattan's *Speeches* (ed. 1822), Vol. IV, pp. 206-7.

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As for the Irish gentry and aristocracy, they were, like their French contemporaries, generally too proud to make money in trade. It was from the proceeds of their country estates that they built their town houses. The peasants were often miserable, it is true, but the agents always managed to squeeze out the rents, and there were some 'improving' landlords who had the sense to make agriculture pay.¹ From the middle of the eighteenth century, moreover, the value of land began to rise. The Parliament, wishing to encourage tillage, gave bounties on the export of corn. This found a ready market in England in view of her rapidly increasing manufacturing population. The financial position of most of the Irish landed proprietors at the end of the eighteenth century was essentially sound. Arthur Young reckoned that Irish rentals had doubled since 1748. Another writer in 1792 says, 'In several parts of Ireland the rents have been tripled, nay quadrupled within forty years past.' These were 'the bright and palmy days of Irish landlordism' referred to by Richard Madden in his *Life of the Countess of Blessington* when potatoes flourished and people who had land in Ireland were able to live like princes.

In subsequent chapters an attempt will be made to describe social life in Dublin under the Georges. It was certainly not a dull town, but was full of life and colour. The citizens were kept amused by a long series of public spectacles. There were continuous military displays and reviews in the Park, and levees and entertainments in the Castle. The town was often illuminated to celebrate public events, and fireworks were not infrequent. Every year there was Donnybrook Fair, which provided excitement for the populace, and every three years the Lord Mayor rode the franchises with the city guilds in procession. Minor amusements were constantly provided by bull-baiting and other rough sports, while every evening towards the end of the century crowds gathered round the old Post Office, in College Green, to see the last adieus of friends, the prancing of the horses, and the

¹ For an account of Irish agriculture and the 'improving landlord' of this period see my *Country and Town in Ireland under the Georges* (1940), chapter iv.

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guards in their scarlet uniforms; and hear the shouts, cracking of whips, and blowing of horns, as the mail-coaches left for the provinces.¹ Some of the streets were alive with traffic—so much so, indeed, that it was remarked by an English visitor in 1779 that there were actually more hackney coaches in Dublin in proportion to its size than there were in London, and that in the centre of the town sedan chairs were almost as common as about St. James's.

Since Queen Elizabeth's reign Dublin had been noted for its taverns and ale-houses. In Gilbert's *History* will be found a long list of those that existed in the eighteenth century. They were scattered all over the city and catered for all sorts of customers. They were Lucas's Coffee House, on Cork Hill (the scene of many duels), frequented by fashionable young men; the Phoenix, in Werburgh Street, where political dinners were held; Dick's Coffee House, in Skinner's Row, much patronized by literary men, for it was over a bookseller's; the Eagle, in Eustace Street, where meetings of the Volunteers were held; the Old Sot's Hole, near Essex Bridge, famous for its beefsteaks and ale; the Eagle Tavern, on Cork Hill, which was demolished at the same time as Lucas's to make room for the Royal Exchange; and many others. Inns were not so common as taverns, as visitors to Dublin found to their cost. By the end of the Georgian period, however, this defect had been remedied. M'Gregor's *New Picture of Dublin*, published in 1821, gives a list of forty hotels in which the traveller could not fail to accommodate himself 'suitable to his ability and inclination'. Of these Morrison's, in Dawson Street, seems to have been the largest and most magnificent. It was elaborately decorated, and contained several 'suites of rooms both for families and single gentlemen'.

With the Union, however, had come a change. The closing of the Parliament meant the exodus of people of wealth and fashion and the gradual fading of Dublin's brilliance.

¹ Stage coaches were run from Dublin to the provinces from the middle of the century. The first mail coaches ran from Dublin in 1790. The Post Office was at first in Dame Street, then in College Green. It was moved to Sackville Street (now O'Connell Street) in 1815.

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The sale of the Parliament House to the Bank of Ireland was the herald of the change. Many of the Irish nobility got rid of their houses in Dublin. Augustus Frederick, third Duke of Leinster, sold his mansion in Kildare Street to the Dublin Society in 1815. Lord Powerscourt's house in William Street had been purchased by the Government for a Stamp Office a few years previously.¹ Lord Cloncurry in his *Personal Recollections* tells us that his father bought Mornington House, in Upper Merrion Street, from the Marquis Wellesley in 1791, and later rented it to Lord Castlereagh, who occupied it at the time of the Union. The price paid in 1791 was £8,000, but in 1802, when it was sold again, it realized only £2,500. Cloncurry declares, writing in 1849, that, 'although still in the best and most fashionable quarter of Dublin, it would not now in all probability fetch the odd £500'. Many similar houses once occupied by noble owners had a much worse fate, for not only did rentals fall, but they degenerated rapidly into poor lodgings or tenements.

The Union, besides bringing about a fall in the value of house property, caused a decline in building. Yet the architectural history of Dublin from this time up to the end of the Georgian period is not so meagre as might be supposed. The King's Inns were finished in 1802. The new General Post Office, a magnificent structure in Ionic style faced by a grand portico supported by massive pillars (which reminds one of the East India House in London as it appears in old prints), was erected in Sackville Street between 1815 and 1820. The same street had been adorned by the graceful column of Nelson's Pillar once known as 'Dublin's Glory', which was raised by public subscription in 1808. St. George's Church, in Hardwicke Place, on the north side of the city, the finest church in Dublin both as regards situation and design, was erected between 1802 and 1813. The Pro-Cathedral in Marlborough Street, begun in 1816, was only the first,

¹ Lord Langford's house in Mary Street was taken over by the Government shortly after his death in 1796 and utilized as a barracks. In 1809 it was occupied by the Paving Board. For a description of the house see Georgian Society publications, vol. iv, pp. 38-42.

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though the most important, of a series of dignified Roman Catholic churches.¹

The public buildings in Dublin in the early part of the eighteenth century had been built more or less on Jacobean lines. The Royal Barracks, the Library of Trinity College, Dr. Steevens' Hospital, the Linen Hall—these are outstanding examples. As the century progressed the later Renaissance styles came into fashion in the same way that they did in England. The Parliament House, the Rotunda Hospital, the Royal Exchange, the Blue-coat School, the Custom House, the Four Courts, as well as Leinster House, Tyrone House, and a host of minor residences, were all built in the style which is commonly termed Palladian. With the opening of the nineteenth century came the Græco-Roman. It was in accordance with this fashion that the King's Inns and the General Post Office were built. This in turn was followed by the mode known as Neo-Grec, which was introduced into Great Britain after the publication of Stuart and Revett's drawings of Greek buildings in 1762. The best example of this style in Dublin is St. George's Church, with its Ionic front, Wren-like steeple, and beautiful interior designed by the Irishman Francis Johnston.² In the second half of the nineteenth century came the Gothic Revival, which swept away the last remnant of the classical taste. The old tradition was preserved as late as 1850, however, in the Broadstone Railway Terminus, built by John Skipton Mulvany, son of Gandon's biographer.

The reader will expect something to be said of the Castle and of the two cathedrals of Christ Church and St. Patrick's, to which the modern guide-books give prominence.

A rough woodcut of Queen Elizabeth's reign shows the

¹ The Metropolitan Pro-Cathedral, begun in 1816, was designed by Sir Richard Morrison (pupil of Gandon), the fashionable architect at the time of the Union. The abbeys and priories of Dublin had been dissolved at the time of the Reformation; while the Penal Laws forbade the open worship of Catholics, although some of the old chapels were reopened and others built during the latter and more tolerant part of the eighteenth century. Thus most of the Roman Catholic churches in Dublin date only from the nineteenth century.

² There is a description, with an engraving after a drawing by George Petrie of St. George's Church in the Rev. G. N. Wright's *An Historical Guide to Dublin* (1821), p. 154. For Francis Johnston, architect, page 61, note 2.

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Viceroy Sir Henry Sydney issuing forth with his military train to subdue the septs from a fortress with bastions, moat, and drawbridge. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the Castle had changed its appearance, for in the course of that century it was largely rebuilt. It was divided into two courts—an upper and a lower—and it was in the former of these that the Viceroys had their private and State apartments. Of the reception rooms the one that figures oftenest in the literature of the period is the ball-room known as St. Patrick's Hall. This was designed by Lord Chesterfield, and is described by Malton as 'a stately, spacious apartment'. It was 82 feet long by 41 broad, and had a richly painted ceiling, besides a gallery for spectators and musicians. From 1784 onward the Viceroys frequently deserted the Castle¹ as a place of residence for the Park. Here the Government had purchased the house of the Ranger, and turned it into a Viceregal Lodge.²

Christ Church Cathedral, the oldest building in Dublin, had been originally founded by the Danes, but it was rebuilt in the early Middle Ages. In the eighteenth century it was the scene of constant ceremonies. For example, the annual thanksgiving service to commemorate the victory over the rebels in 1641 was held there. This was attended by the Viceroy and his Court, who were edified by listening to a martial sermon. Orchestral concerts were also constantly given in Christ Church by eminent artists for fashionable audiences in aid of charities. Warburton described the building in 1818 as being in good repair, but deplores the fact that, despite the efforts of the Wide Street Commissioners, it was still surrounded by 'mean habitations'.³

¹ The Castle for over 700 years the mainspring of Dublin life is now a collection of government offices, the former Chapel Royal is now the Catholic Church of the Most Holy Trinity.

² This house (now the residence of the President of the Irish Free State) was built in 1751, and was bought in 1784 by the Government for the use of the Lord-Lieutenant. The wings were added in 1808, and the Ionic portico by Francis Johnston in 1816.

³ Christ Church Cathedral is the oldest building in Dublin. It was founded about 1038, enlarged in 1172, rebuilt 1181-1225 and restored in 1870-1. Lambert Simnel was crowned here in 1487; Mass was celebrated in the time of James II, and a Thanksgiving Service was soon afterwards held for the victory of William III.

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St. Patrick's Cathedral was of more interest to visitors on account of its connexion with Swift.¹ They liked to survey his monument with its painful epitaph which informed them that he had gone

UBI SÆVA INDIGNATIO
ULTERIUS
COR LACERARE NEQUIT.²

This stirred the imagination and gave rise to moral reflections not unpleasantly tinged with melancholy. St. Patrick's, which dates from the twelfth century, was also rebuilt in the early Middle Ages. By 1818 it had fallen into disrepair chiefly owing to damp, for in seasons of heavy rain it was flooded by an underground river named the Poddle—sometimes to the depth of six or seven feet. Like Christ Church, from which it is not far distant, it was surrounded by poor dwellings and narrow streets.³

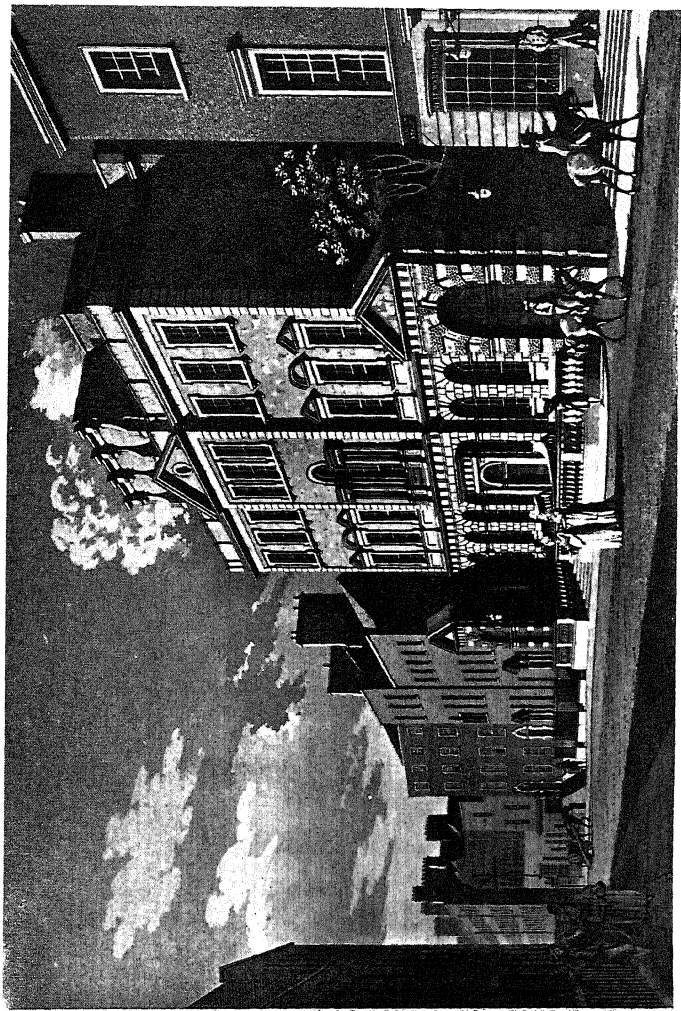
Of other churches, St. Thomas's, in Marlborough Street, and St. Catherine's, in Thomas Street, were built in the eighteenth century. Both were in the Palladian style—more solid perhaps than beautiful. St. Werburgh's, close to Christ Church Cathedral, is of greater interest. It was rebuilt in 1712, destroyed by fire in 1754, and restored in 1759.⁴ As it now stands in Werburgh Street it has lost its eighteenth-century embellishments—its tower and spire—but retains its classical doorway. Dr. Delany, husband of the writer of the delightful letters, was rector of the church between 1730 and 1734. He was an excellent preacher, and very popular with his fashionable congregation. As the Viceregal residence was in the parish the Lord-Lieutenant and his

¹ Swift was Dean of St. Patrick's for thirty-two years, 1713-45.

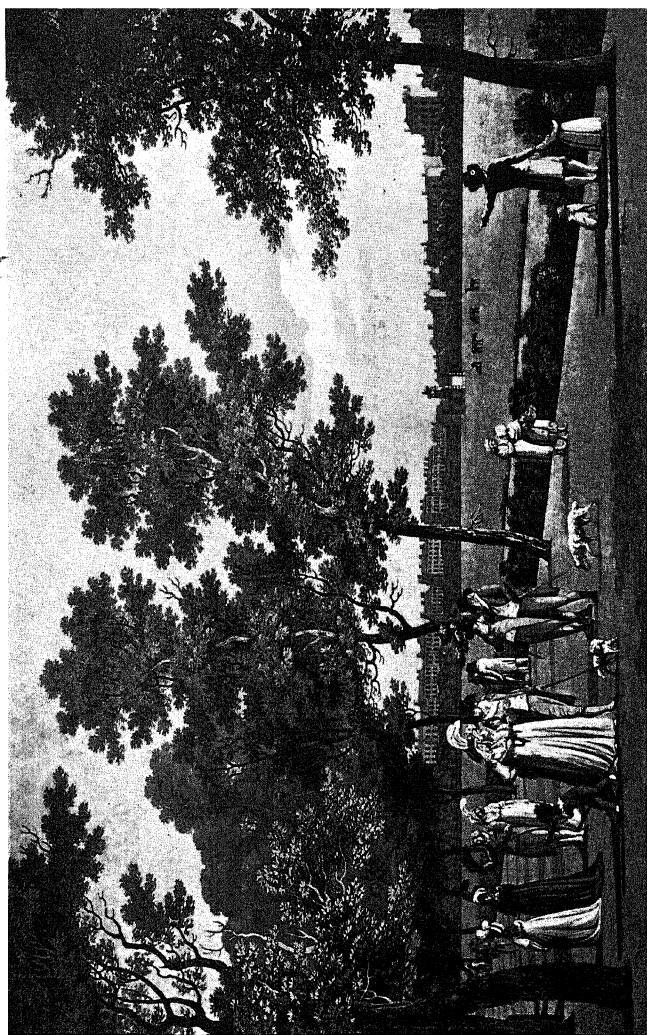
² 'Where fierce indignation can lacerate the heart no more.'

³ St. Patrick's Cathedral, built about 1190, was restored in 1863-9. See *The Cathedral Church of St. Patrick's* by the Most Rev. J. H. Bernard (new edition revised by the Rev. J. E. L. Oulton, 1940).

⁴ St. Thomas' Church, Marlborough Street, was built in 1758-62; it was destroyed in recent troubles and is now replaced by a little neo-Byzantine church not far from the Catholic Pro-Cathedral. St. Catherine's Church in Thomas' Street was built in 1769, and St. Werburgh's, near Christ Church Cathedral, dates from Anglo-Norman times.



LORD POWERSCOURT'S HOUSE, DUBLIN
From James Malton's *Picturesque and Descriptive View of the City of Dublin* (1792-99)



ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN, DUBLIN

From James Malton's *Picturesque and Descriptive View of the City of Dublin* (1792-99)

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household used sometimes to attend the church for service. The enormous Viceregal pew in the gallery still remains, an excellent vantage-point from which to survey the beautifully ornamented east window, the carved woodwork, and dignified monuments of stone. The recollection that Lord Edward Fitzgerald was buried in the vaults below after his death from wounds received during his arrest in the spring of 1798 comes as rather a jar—a sharp reminder of the revolutionary currents that underlay the solidarity of eighteenth-century life, and were to destroy its culture.

It cannot truthfully be asserted that either the public buildings or the private mansions of Dublin rival those of London for size or magnificence. Nor has Dublin, owing to the worn and dilapidated appearance of many of her streets, the chaste elegance of Bath. She has, however, a beauty and flavour of her own, and lovers of the eighteenth century will not be disappointed in her. One can walk for miles in the Irish capital in a completely Georgian scene in a way that is not possible in any town in Great Britain. Here is an attraction for the visitor, and one that should make a particular appeal to Londoners, for the streets and squares of the English capital, as shown to us in old prints, had very much the air and appearance of those still standing in the Georgian parts of present-day Dublin.

One of the most agreeable walks in Dublin is along its spacious quays, which extend for some miles on both sides of the river dividing the city into two. To get the flavour of the town the stranger should walk down the quayside from Phoenix Park towards Carlisle (now O'Connell) Bridge. He will pass the imposing Four Courts on his left, and catch a glimpse of the old quarter round Christ Church on the right. When he reaches the bridge, a famous vantage-point, he will be able to obtain a fine panorama of the interior of the city. If he faces towards the sea he will have Gandon's masterpiece, the magnificent Custom House, just before him; Sackville Street with the General Post Office is on the left, with Nelson's Pillar in the centre, the Rotunda at the far end, and the spire of St. George's beyond. To the right lies the entrance to what was formerly the House of Lords, a beautiful Corinthian portico; while the superb west front of Trinity

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College can be seen almost opposite. If he looks back up the river a good view of the old houses along the quayside is to be had, with the towers of Christ Church Cathedral and the spire of the Augustinian Church of St. John the Baptist in the distance. All this looks best in the setting sun when the light draws fresh colour from the stone and red-brick fronts of the houses.

Of the old squares of Dublin, which are such a prominent feature of the town—Merrion Square, Fitzwilliam Square, Mountjoy Square, and Rutland Square—the last, on account of its historical associations, is perhaps the most interesting. From a window in the Municipal Gallery of Modern Art—Lord Charlemont's old house—a good view of the once fashionable Rotunda Gardens may be obtained. One of the Rotunda Assembly Rooms is now occupied by the Gate Theatre. The celebrated Round Room has been converted into a cinema. Mountjoy Square, a little to the north-east of the Rotunda Hospital, was built about the time of the Union. It was a very fashionable quarter once, but is now decayed and forlorn—a contrast to St. Stephen's Green and the other two squares (Merrion and Fitzwilliam) to the south of the river, which still flourish.¹

Scattered here and there in Dublin are isolated relics of the eighteenth century which are worth a closer inspection—Marsh's Library, for instance, near St. Patrick's Cathedral, where Swift used to read, the charming little oak-lined interior being just as it was over 200 years ago;² the graceful Corinthian column made of stone, surmounted by a phoenix and supported on a plinth surrounded by steps, which was placed by Lord Chesterfield in the Park when he was Viceroy of Ireland in 1745; the beautiful little Casino (already referred to), built for 'solitude and retirement', designed by Sir William Chambers for Lord Charlemont on the outskirts of the city; the elegant monument that was erected on the

¹ See 'The Georgian Squares of Dublin' by Eleanor Butler in *Country Life*, vol. c, 1946.

² Marsh's Library was built, and established by an Englishman, Narcissus Marsh, Archbishop of Armagh, in 1704, the books forming the nucleus of the collection having been the library of Edward Stillingfleet (1635–99), Bishop of Worcester.

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west side of Merrion Square in memory of the Duke of Rutland in 1792.¹ The fountain that originally was part of the Rutland Memorial is gone (destroyed by the mob), and the decorated stone arch under which it was placed has suffered with time, but this is still beautiful, with its lovely vases and urns, which are said to have come from Wedgwood's works at Etruria.² These are eloquent reminders of a past when taste was good, and when educated men took pleasure and pride in their surroundings.³

¹ For a description of the Rutland Memorial see the *Irish Builder*, vol. xi (May 1898), pp. 66-7; also the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. xxvii (1897), pp. 179-81.

² Wedgwood's dessert services, black tea-pots, bas-reliefs for chimney-pieces, jasper ware, framed heads, figures and busts were all very popular in Dublin. The firm of Wedgwood had a number of agents in the Irish capital from 1772 onwards, also show-rooms; these were first in College Green, then in Henry Street, and finally in Upper Sackville Street. The Sackville Street show-rooms were closed in 1810, for the business had suffered like many others during the wars with France, and the Union had drawn many people of wealth and fashion away from Dublin. See a series of articles on 'Wedgwood and Dublin' published by the author in the *Irish Times* of 23rd, 25th, 26th June 1936.

³ There are very useful notes on the 'Streets and Buildings' of Georgian Dublin in Maurice Craig's *Dublin* (1952), appendix I.

CHAPTER III

Life of the Rich

Rich men furnished with ability, living peaceably in their habitations.

Ecclesiasticus xliv, 6

Every entertainment which has the authority of Fashion in England, prevails here, and some it may be, in a yet greater degree.

*Four Letters originally written in French
relating to the Kingdom of Ireland* (Dublin, 1739)

The gentry I fear have got the best end of the staff in this Capital.

ROBERT JEPHSON,

*The Confessions of Jacques Baptiste
Couteau* (Dublin, 1794), vol. 1, p. 90

Lord Cloncurry wrote from his recollections of Dublin before the Union that it was 'one of the most agreeable places of residence in Europe. There were no conveniences belong to a capital in these days which it did not possess. Society in the upper classes was as brilliant and polished as that of Paris in its best days, while social intercourse was conducted with a conviviality that could not be equalled in France.'

People in upper-class society in Ireland in the eighteenth century were really very much the same as elsewhere. 'There are great numbers of the principal people residing in Ireland', wrote Arthur Young, 'who are as liberal in their ideas as any people in Europe, . . . a man may go into a vast variety of families which he will find actuated by no other principles than those of the most cultivated politeness and the most liberal urbanity.' And Mrs. Delany, writing of Dublin earlier in the century, says: 'As for the generality of people that I meet with here, they are much the same as in England—a mixture of good and bad; all that I have met with behave

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themselves very decently, according to their rank, now and then an oddity breaks out, but none so extraordinary but that I can match them in England.' She was especially struck however, by the 'great sociableness' of the people she came across. 'There is a heartiness among them,' she says, 'that is more *like Cornwall* than any I have known.' Every one who has left a record of a visit to Dublin during the period seems to have been of the same opinion. All were impressed by the air of gaiety in the houses of the well-to-do which went with a peculiarly splendid way of living—a multiplicity of servants, great profusion of dishes on the table, abundant wine.

Bishop Berkeley noticed that while in England many gentlemen with a thousand a year never drank wine in their houses, in Ireland this could hardly be said of any who had but a hundred a year, and he demands in *The Querist* 'whether any kingdom in Europe be so good a customer at Bordeaux as Ireland?' Lord Chesterfield when he was Viceroy reckoned that 5,000 tuns of wine were annually imported into Ireland, to destroy the 'constitutions, the faculties, and too often the fortunes of those of superior rank'. He was, indeed, horrified by the amount of claret that the Irish gentry managed to consume. He looked upon excessive drinking as 'a most beastly vice', and in one of his letters expresses the pious hope that it would please God by His thunder 'to turn all the wines in Ireland sour'. No one of any position in Dublin would have thought himself truly hospitable unless he provided large quantities of claret for his guests (witness the enormous mahogany wine-trays of the period, used for carrying wine from the cellar to the dining-room), with the result that the men seldom rejoined the women after dinner in a state of complete sobriety. The most excessive drinking naturally took place on festive occasions, the chief stimulating agent being the interminable toasts that were given, in accordance with the fashion of the times. Of these 'the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of the good and great King William, who delivered us from Popery, slavery, arbitrary power, brass money, and wooden shoes', was much the most popular, which led Barrington to make the ironic remark that 'Could his Majesty, King William, learn in the other world that he has been the cause of more broken heads

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and drunken men, since his departure, than all his predecessors, he must be the proudest ghost, and most conceited skeleton that ever entered the gardens of Elysium'.¹

Indulgence in claret and port was not the only symptom of that extravagance which brought the descendants of so many Irish gentry of the period into the Encumbered Estates Court, for their meals also were so prodigious that one marvels at their digestive capacity. 'High Living is too much the fashion here,' wrote Mrs. Delany from Delville, her villa near Dublin,² in 1752. 'You are not invited to dinner to any private gentleman of £1,000 a year or less, that does not give you seven *dishes* at one course, and Burgundy and Champagne; and these dinners they give once or twice a week.' She and her husband entertained a great deal, and often had as many as twenty persons to dinner, but, although she complains on several occasions of lack of means, her own menus as given in her letters are quite remarkable. For four guests—Primate Stone and his sister and the Bishop of Derry and his wife—she provided as follows. The first course consisted of 'Fish—beefstakes—soup—rabbits and onions—Fillet Veal.' In the second course was included 'Turkey Pout—salmon grilde—pickled salmon—quails—little Terrene Peas—Cream—Mushrooms—Apple Pye—Crab—Leveret—Cheese-cakes.' For the 'Dessert' they had 'Blamange—Cherries—Dutch Cheese—Raspberries and Cream—sweetmeats and jelly—strawberries and cream—almond cream—currants and goosberries—Orange Butter.' Another menu detailed in a letter from Delville (6th October 1764) for twelve persons, including the Delanys themselves, was as follows: 'Turbot and Soles, remove Ham; Force meat, etc.; two partridges and two grouse; rabbits and onions; Pies; sweetbreads and crumbs; Salmigundi; Soup; Boiled Chicken;

¹ Peter Browne (d. 1735), Bishop of Cork and Ross, wrote a 'Discourse upon drinking Healths' in 1716, in which he denounced the practice as leading to drunkenness and ill-feeling. This is the explanation of a popular toast of the period: 'May we never want a Williamite to kick the . . . of a Jacobite!—and a fig for the Bishop of Cork!'

² There is an account of the Delany's villa of Delville (Glasnevin) by F. E. Ball in his *History of County Dublin* (1920), Part VI, pp. 130-43. See also the present writer's *The Stranger in Ireland* (1954).

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Collop veal and olives; pease; Cream Pudding; Plumb Crocant; Chine of Mutton; Turkey in jelly; Hare; Lobster Fricassée.' The items here are not divided into 'courses', but there is a note under 'Dessert': 'Nine things—six of them fruit out of our own garden, and a plate of fine Alpine Strawberries.' When the Delanys visited their friends they were entertained even more lavishly, for, judging by the menus preserved by Mrs. Delany it was usual, in addition to mutton and beef, to provide chickens and ham, fish and pies, potatoes and vegetables, besides numerous dessert dishes.¹

This lavish expenditure was made possible by the substantial rents which came in from Irish estates, and because labour in Ireland was cheap and the price of provisions was low. Swift recommended Stella to live in Ireland, because the cost of living was a half less there than in England. And, writing to Mrs. Delany before her marriage, he pointed out that one could live in Dublin at least three times better than in England, where everything was thrice as dear. His own 'sickness and years', he remarked in the same letter, made it impossible for him to live in London, for, as he goes on to explain, his 'poor revenues' were 'sinking every day', and he must have 'three horses, as many servants, and a large house; neither can I live', he adds, 'without constant wine'.²

As for Irish servants, with regard to whose 'villainies and frauds to their masters and mistresses' Swift himself was so eloquent,³ their wages were low, but they had many perquisites. Mrs. Delany tells us, for instance, that they were generally permitted to eat up the remains of the huge dinners of the period, and they were not kept under very severe dis-

¹ The hours of meals at this period according to Mrs. Delany were: Breakfast at 9 a.m.; Dinner at 3 or 4 p.m.; Tea or Coffee in the 'afternoon'; and Supper between 8 and 11 p.m.

² Arthur Young observes in his *Tour in Ireland* (1780): 'The expenses of a family [in Dublin] in proportion to those of London are as five to eight.' He found everything cheap in the Irish capital except lodgings. Young lived in Dublin for some months.

³ See Swift's *Directions to Servants* (1745).

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cipline.¹ Like their masters, they drank a good deal (Lady Morgan scathingly refers to them as 'impersonations of whiskey'), and, though generally very loyal to the families they served, especially in the country, were often lazy and insolent. 'One can scarce pass an hour in any company', says a writer in the *Hibernian Magazine* for 1778, 'without hearing it frequently asserted that the present generation of servants in this country are the proudest, laziest, the most profligate, insolent and extravagant set of mortals anywhere to be found on the face of the globe.' The truth was that there were far too many domestics. 'We keep many of them in our houses, as we do our plate on our sideboards,' wrote Dr. Samuel Madden in his *Reflections and Resolutions Proper for the Gentlemen of Ireland*, published in Dublin in 1738, 'more for show than use, and rather to let people see that we have them than that we have any occasion for them.'

A passion for show was certainly a weakness of the Irish gentry. Dr. Madden also complains that every one dressed above his circumstances and fortune. There was too much gold and silver lace and too many plate buttons—too much 'gaudy frippery', in fact—from France and other countries abroad. As O'Keeffe, the playwright, remarks however, 'these were dressy times', and the Irish gentry can hardly be blamed for following the prevailing fashions. But they were too apt to exceed their incomes, and in no way is this more in evidence than in their carriages and horses. Even people of moderate incomes, such as the Delanys, kept their chariot with four horses, a coachman, footman, and at least one postillion. These equipages were often taken over with them in the packet to England that their owners might pay visits in comfort or add to their enjoyment of a sojourn at Bath. In his *Personal Sketches* Barrington gives an account of the coach *de cérémonie* used by his family in Dublin, with its four black horses, two postillions, and sixteen-stone footman. This formed part of a procession to Old Court House near Bray, Co. Wicklow (the house of the bride where the ceremony was performed), on the occasion of his brother's wedding,

¹ See an amusing account of a party given by high-spirited servants in a private house in St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, during the absence of the family, in the *Hibernian Magazine* for November 1781.

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when it was accompanied by the old family butler on his father's hunter. The equipage presumably contained the prospective bridegroom, for Barrington and his other brothers followed in an old travelling chaise, and, though magnificently dressed in white coats and blue satin vests with knee-breeches well laced and spangled, they had no money to pay the turnpike, and only got through the barrier in time for the ceremony by putting the guardian in good humour by pretending to be players from Smock Alley playhouse.

With the general laxity of manners went a passion for duels. A duel, Barrington tells us, was considered so much a necessary piece of a young gentleman's education that the two first questions always asked as to a young man's respectability and qualifications, especially when he proposed for a wife, were, 'What family is he of?' and 'Did he ever blaze?' So universal was the practice, indeed, that duelling clubs were actually established, the conditions of which were that before a man was balloted for he had to sign a solemn declaration that he had exchanged a shot or a thrust with some antagonist, and a code of laws and regulations was drawn up as a standard to refer to on all points of honour. People took out their pistols on all sorts of provocations—some of them petty and ridiculous. Richard Daly, who was manager of the Theatre Royal in Dublin towards the end of the century, fought nineteen duels in two years—three with swords and sixteen with pistols. It would be interesting to investigate the causes of some of these numerous engagements.¹ Even the most prominent people did not scorn this way of settling their differences. The Lord Chancellor of Ireland, the Earl of Clare, fought Curran, the Master of the Rolls. The Chief Justice, Lord Clonmell, fought Lord Tyrawley, a Privy Councillor. Lord Norbury, Chief Justice of the Common

¹ In a letter written by Edmond Malone in February 1773 he describes a duel in Dublin between Colonel Blaquiere, who had just arrived in Ireland as Chief Secretary, and Mr. Bagwell, a fiery member of a Tipperary family. 'Nothing,' remarks his biographer, 'could have been more unprovoked by the former, or more unwarrantable on the part of the latter. But the account shows the stuff of which duels were commonly made—a sanguinary spirit, ferocity, misconception, ill-temper, pride, irritability and—nonsense.' James Prior, *Life of Malone* (1860), p. 40.

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Pleas, was famous for his duels, and even Grattan was always ready to sustain his arguments with his pistols. He began by fighting Lord Earlsfort, and ended by shooting Isaac Corry, Chancellor of the Exchequer. These numerous duels were often fought in the fields behind Merrion Square, or in the courtyard of Lucas's Coffee House, on Cork Hill. But the favourite place for them was the Park, where the combatants did not always confine themselves to secluded spots, but often 'stood up' on the roads. The danger to passers-by from stray bullets was evidently not inconsiderable, for it was frequently complained of in contemporary newspapers.

For the lack of discipline and luxurious way of living of the Irish gentry Dr. Madden believed that he had discovered the cause in

'the original customs and manners of those who came over as adventurers in the many wars and troubles that so frequently happened here. As therefore the bulk of our gentry are descended from Englishmen and soldiers [he explains] they seem to have inherited their stomachs, as well as their courage, which have been so often whetted by feastings and famines in their turns, that it has made us the fonder of enjoying our plenty where we can get it. And besides this, it is certain we have had few people and less money here, and little or nothing but land, and great herds of cattle, to lay out our little wealth on, and provisions being so plenty, does as naturally beget good cheer, as wild wastes of pastures do cheap grazing. We had neither the buildings or gardens of Italy, her antiquities or pictures, her statues or manuscripts to refine our taste, or employ our time or our money on, and so I fancy, instead of imitating the wiser people on the Continent, we fell to what was next us, and enjoyed what the richness of our soil, and the frankness of our people, when undisturbed with war, threw before us.'

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, however, there was a marked improvement in the manners of the Irish gentry. 'Gaming and duelling are attributed to the Irish,' wrote Richard Twiss, who made a tour through Ireland in 1775, 'but probably with little foundation. As to the science of gaming, possibly it may prevail in Dublin, as it does in

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every great city in Europe; and with regard to the art of duelling, a prudent traveller may as easily avoid any such disagreeable encounters there, as elsewhere.' 'With respect to drinking,' says Philip Luckombe,¹ another English visitor, writing four years later, 'I have been happily disappointed; the bottle is circulated freely, but not to that excess we have heard it was, and I of course dreaded to find. Common sense is resuming her empire; the practice of cramming guests is already exploded, and that of gorging them is daily losing ground. Wherever I have yet been, I was always desired to do just as I would chuse; nay, I have been at some tables, where the practice of drinking healths at dinner was entirely laid aside.'

The more normal life of the Irish gentry is reflected in the delightful letters of Mrs. Delany, the niece of Lord Lansdowne, who crossed over to Ireland and married Dr. Patrick Delany in 1743. Delany was a Fellow of Trinity and dean of a northern diocese, a fine scholar and wit, and so popular in Dublin that he won even the approbation of the critical Mrs. Pilkington,² who praises him in her *Memoirs* as being always ready 'to help anyone in distress', and for the 'ease, cheerfulness and hospitality' of his manner when giving 'an elegant entertainment'. 'We were born for some society,' wrote Mrs. Delany in a letter; 'it refines our manners, it keeps up our good humour, and without it we should grow rusty and intractable.' And, indeed, she and her husband were ex-

¹ Philip Luckombe (d. 1803), author of *The History and Art of Printing and England's Gazetteer* and other works, lived most of his life in London. He edited several dictionaries and encyclopædias and had a celebrated collection of shells.

² Lætitia Pilkington (1712-50) was the daughter of a doctor of Dutch origin named Lewen who settled in Dublin about 1710. In 1729 she married a penniless Irish parson named Mathew Pilkington, who became chaplain to Lady Charlemont, but subsequently went to England. Mrs. Pilkington was for a time a great favourite with Swift, of whom she gives many interesting details, but she finally alienated him by her irresponsible behaviour. The latter part of her life, most of which she spent in London, was extremely unfortunate. Her *Memoirs* were published in three volumes between 1748 and 1754. There is a charming essay on this gay adventuress by Virginia Woolf in *The Common Reader* (1925).

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tremely fond of gathering people around them at their villa of Delville. They were on intimate terms with Lord Mornington, Lord Sackville, and others in good society, including the Chesterfields and other Viceroys and their wives. They also paid constant visits to numerous friends in the neighbourhood. They admired their pictures and prints, listened to music, and had many delightful picnics in their grounds. Their own house and garden, however, chiefly occupied their attention: 'I would not give my sweet Delville for any palace I ever yet saw,' writes the Dean's wife. When at home she spent most of her time in attending to her garden, where she took special pleasure in feeding the robins and chaffinches out of her hands. On summer mornings they would breakfast under the nut-trees with an Irish harper agreeably by, and in the evenings watch the cows being milked, or walk over the meadows feeding their deer. Mrs. Delany was very fond of painting and drawing, of reading and playing on the harpsichord, and on winter evenings when the candles were lit the husband and wife would share some interesting book or delightful piece of music together or play at commerce or cribbage. On wet days the lady sorted her mosses and ores, or arranged her china (she had picked up some fine pieces in Dublin); periodically she dusted and aired her husband's numerous books in the library. Her special delight was to collect shells, and these she worked into flowers with which she decorated the ceiling of their little chapel in imitation of the stucco then so fashionable.

Not many years ago, through the kindness of the owners of Delville, the writer of this book was permitted to inspect part of the house and walk through the garden. She saw the drawing-room, which Mrs. Delany describes as being hung with tapestry and gilt mirrors and furnished with marble tables and curtains and chairs of crimson mohair, and the chapel (used as a sitting-room) on the left side of the hall. The elaborate shell-work was still there on the ceiling—a pleasing memento of days less crowded than ours. The roses and the nine-pin alley with which the Delanys used to entertain the friends that came down from Dublin had gone, but the little temple where Dr. Delany and Swift sat admiring the distant prospect was there. And opening a postern gate

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at the far end of the grounds one entered the tiny graveyard where Dr. Delany is buried and saw a tablet on the wall. He died at Bath in 1768, an old man of eighty-three, but had wished to be buried at home. Now Delville is no more. The house has been pulled down and a large new hospital built in the grounds. One of the fine chimneypieces from the old house has been erected in one of the hospital rooms—a pleasing remembrance of the past.

A somewhat similar life at Castletown, the seat of the Right Hon. Thomas Conolly, who had married Lady Louisa Lennox, daughter of the Duke of Richmond, is described by Lady Sarah Napier¹ a little later in the century. The house was as she says, 'always the receptacle for society, comfort and friendship'. A more formal *milieu* existed at the Duke of Leinster's magnificent mansion at Carton, not very far off, of which an account is given by Lady Caroline Stuart (daughter of the Earl of Bute and wife of Lord Carlow, later Earl of Portarlington) when on a visit there in the autumn of 1778.

'Everything [she writes] seems to go on in great state here. The Duchess appears in a sack and hoop and diamonds in an afternoon; French horns playing at every meal, and such quantities of plate, etc., that one would imagine oneself in a palace; and there are servants without end. . . . It is not the fashion at Carton to play at cards. The ladies sit and work, and the gentlemen lollop about and go to sleep—at least the Duke does, for he snored so loud the other night that we all got into a great fit of laughing and waked him.'

Every morning the Duke's chaplain, who lived in the house, read prayers. Lady Carlow noticed that the ladies attended very devoutly, but she could not say so much for the gentlemen. She and her husband accompanied the Kildare family

² Lady Sarah Lennox, daughter of Charles, second Duke of Richmond, was sister to Emily, Duchess of Leinster, and to Louisa, wife of the Right Hon. Thomas Conolly. Her first husband was Sir Charles Bunbury, her second the Hon. George Napier. The Napiers had a house at Celbridge, Co. Kildare, and it was while this was being added to that they stayed with the Conolly's at Castletown. For Emily Duchess of Leinster (1731-1815) and Lady Louisa Conolly (1743-1821), see lives by Brian Fitzgerald (1949 and 1950).

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to church, where they had a 'very comfortable gallery with a good fire'. They also drove out with them in 'the coach and six' to visit the Conollys at Castletown.

Apart from visits to friends, those who lived in Dublin and the neighbourhood were kept amused by a constant round of gaiety. Miss Herbert, sister of Henry Herbert, afterwards Earl of Carnarvon, wrote to Lady Louisa Stuart on 11th April 1782, 'Nothing can be so gay as Dublin is—the Castle twice a week, the opera twice a week, with plays, assemblies, and suppers to fill up the time.' The parties given at the Castle were naturally on the grandest scale. Here is an account by Mrs. Delany of a ball that took place there in the spring of 1732:

'The ball was in the old beef-eaters' hall, a room that holds seven hundred people seated; it was well it did, for never did I behold a greater crowd. We were all placed in rows one above another, so much raised that the last row almost *touched the ceiling!* The gentlemen say we looked very handsome, and compared us to Cupid's Paradise in the puppet-show. At 11 o'clock minuets were finished, and the Duchess went to the basset table. After an hour's playing the Duke, Duchess, and nobility, marched into the supper room, which was the council chamber. In the midst of the room was placed a holly tree, illuminated by a hundred wax tapers; round it was placed all sorts of meat, fruit and sweetmeats; servants waited next, and were encompassed round by a table, to which the company came by turns to take what they wanted. When the doors were *first* opened the hurly-burly is not to be described; squawking, shrieking, all sorts of noises; some ladies lost their lappets, others were trod upon. . . . I and my company were more discreet than to go with the torrent; we staid till people had satisfied their curiosity and hunger, and then took a quiet view of the famous tree which occasioned more rout than it was worth. . . . There was a monstrous crowd. I did not dance.'

Towards the end of the century the most magnificent entertainments were given by the Duke and Duchess of Rutland, who had brought over with them from England complete services of gold and silver plate, and who were so

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lavish in their hospitality that it was commonly remarked that they might well have been sovereigns of a rich and independent kingdom.¹

The Duke of Leinster also entertained on a large scale; so did the Marquis of Ely and other members of the Irish aristocracy. In the *Anthologia Hibernica* for April 1794 is a description of a grand 'ballet' which had just taken place at Antrim House.² This is worth quoting as a typical entertainment of the period:

'This day se'nnight the Marchionness of Antrim gave a most superb rout, ball and supper, at her ladyship's house in Merrion Square, to a most brilliant and extremely numerous assemblage of the first rank and fashion. His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant and most of the nobility of the town were present. The Grand Scots' ballet, which has been of so much expectation in the circles of fashion, was on this occasion performed by the following Ladies, with the universal and unbounded applause of the whole assembly: Countess of Antrim, Lady Letitia Macdonald, Lady Isabella Beresford, Lady Anne Butler [here follow the names of ten others]. . . . The ladies who danced the ballet were in uniform dresses of white muslin, trimmed with blue ribbands; with sashes and petticoats trimmed with silver fringe: head dresses—white turbans spangled with silver, and blue feathers. The music which was all in the Scots' style, was compiled for the occasion. The ballet commenced with a Strathspey in slow time, and the figures of the dance varied with the tunes, which had a most admirable effect. The ballet, on its commencement, excited so much admiration as to draw the whole company crowding to the ball-room which scarcely left the charming performers room to move. But by the polite and persuasive interference of the noble marchioness, the room was tolerably

¹ See an account of a ball and supper at the Castle given by the Duke and Duchess of Rutland in the *Hibernian Magazine* for March 1784. On this occasion the Duke of Rutland did not forget the poor. £1,000 was ordered to be distributed among the parishes of Dublin.

² Antrim House, built about 1776, was on the north side of Merrion Square. It was sold in 1801 and converted into an hotel. There is a description of the house in the *Georgian Society Records*, vol. iv. (1912), pp. 18-22.

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well cleared, and the press of the company restrained by barriers of ribband, held by noblemen. . . . Dancing commenced at 11 o'clock, and at one the company were summoned to the supper rooms, where elegance and plenty seemed to vie in the decoration of the festive board—while wit, beauty and all the gaiety and splendour of fashion enlivened the enchanting scene. Dancing was resumed after supper, and the company separated with reluctance at 6 o'clock in the morning.'

The masked ball was especially popular in Dublin under the Georges, and people dressed in the most fantastic characters. Here are a few descriptions from newspapers of the time to bear out this statement: 'a grand Turk very superb who drank wine most irreligiously'; 'a jolly tinker who had something to say to every person'; 'a Pan well-dressed playing on his pipes with great judgment and ease'; 'a Spaniard of amazing size'; 'a Methodist preacher, characteristical and masked with judgment'; a Sultana most splendidly dressed'; 'a half-abbé and half-officer, a very laughable figure'; 'a side-board of plate'; 'a representation of the Devil.'¹ It is no wonder that we hear complaints of the rude pressure of the mob who gathered round the doors to see guests arrive and were 'vastly incommodious' when the night's entertainment was done by crowding around and impeding the return to the carriages. Not that people of fashion were unpopular, for there was a general idea that all forms of luxury gave employment to the poor. And the rich, especially during the time of the non-importation agreements, made a point of wearing stuffs of pure 'Irish manufacture'—'even to the shoes and petticoats of the ladies.'²

Campbell, the North of Ireland clergyman who made a

¹ There is an account of a masquerade given at the Music Hall in Fishamble Street on the Eve of St. Patrick's Day, 1778, in Gilbert's *History of Dublin*, Vol. I, pp. 83-4. See also the *Hibernian Magazine* for March 1778, May 1780, May 1789, and June 1800, for accounts of entertainments given by the Countess of Bective, Lady Castlereagh, and others in society.

² Irish satins, etc., were worn at a masquerade at Leinster House in April 1779; at an assembly at the Rotunda, May 1779; and at a ball at the Castle in March 1788. See the *Hibernian Magazine*.

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tour of his country in 1777,¹ thought Dublin streets depressing to those who knew London, 'so rich and full of business'; still, he admitted that all kinds of social pleasures in the Irish capital were easier to obtain. 'Every night in the winter,' wrote Arthur Young, 'there is a ball or a party,' but the English farmer remarks that many Dublin houses to which he was invited were not nearly large enough for the numerous company that was squeezed into them. This was also the opinion of De La Tocnaye, a young French *émigré* who was in Dublin a little later (1796-7). De La Tocnaye was present at one rout where every room from the street door to the garret was full of handsome, well-dressed women so closely packed together that they could hardly stir and were forced to speak through their fans. The Frenchman was fond of feminine society, but thought that on this occasion he would have enjoyed it better had he been able to find a more secluded place to converse than the staircase.

In the highest circles Irish ladies were distinguished for their intelligence, wit, and repartee, but Lady Morgan's mother about the time of the Union told her that much of this had been so coarse in the middle of the century that it would not then be mentionable to polite ears. The women of the middle class were praised by strangers as a pleasing mixture of modesty and vivacity, but they were as often criticized for frivolity and lack of interest in things intellectual. Edward Melville, an American citizen who visited Ireland between 1805 and 1807, contrasted them unfavourably in this respect with French women. They seemed to him to be thinking more of the dinners that they gave their guests than the nature of their discourse.² Conversation in Ireland,

¹ The Rev. Thomas Campbell (1733-95) was born in Co. Tyrone, and was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He published his *Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland* in 1779, and was the author of a number of other books. He paid many visits to London (where he died) and was well acquainted with Dr. Johnson and various members of his circle.

² 'In general the middling ranks in this country are not as fond of reading as the Americans. At our convivial meetings here, the conversation rarely turns on books; indeed, politics are often a topic with us, and religious animosities form the basis of politics in Ireland.' E. Melville, *Sketches of Society in France and Ireland* (1811), Vol. II, p. 148.

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however, has often disconcerted or puzzled the Anglo-Saxon. 'In England conversation is a game of chess,' explains Lady Morgan—'the result of judgment, memory and deliberation—with us it is a game of battledore, and our ideas like our shuttlecocks are thrown lightly one to the other, bounding and rebounding—played more for amusement than conquest, and leaving the players equally animated by the game, and careless of its results.'¹ Yet Irish wit when exported across the Channel had a certain value. 'Ireland, which one did not suspect,' wrote Horace Walpole in 1756, 'is become the staple of wit, and I find coins *bons-mots* for our greatest men.'

Apart from racial considerations, one may explain the sprightliness of Irish conversation by 'the mixture of ranks' which then distinguished Dublin Society. Politicians, soldiers, divines, and lawyers all rubbed shoulders together in the great houses.² The barristers were an especially lively element. They were famous for their eloquence and wit and had more time for social pleasures than London lawyers.³ As in London, the public places of entertainment were open to all except the poorest. Chief of these were the Rotunda Gardens and Assembly Rooms (an imitation of Vauxhall and

¹ There is an amusing account of a dinner given by Lord Redesdale as Lord Chancellor of Ireland to the judges and king's counsel in Dublin which illustrates this point in Barrington's *Personal Sketches* (ed. 1830), Vol. I, pp. 339-43.

² 'I found the state of society in Dublin very different from what I had observed in London,' wrote Richard Cumberland in his *Memoirs* (1807), Vol. I, pp. 228-9, 'the professions more intermixt, and ranks more blended; in the great houses I met a promiscuous assembly of politicians, lawyers, soldiers and divines.' Cumberland was struck both by the profusion of their tables and by the general spirit of conviviality. 'The professional gravity of character maintained by our English dignitaries [he adds] was here laid aside.'

³ There is an entertaining description of a dining club formed by the young barristers of Dublin in Barrington's *Personal Sketches*, Vol. II, pp. 112-13. Warburton remarks in his *History of Dublin* (Vol. II, p. 1023) that although famous for eloquence and wit, in a country where every peasant was an orator, they were not so famous for closeness of argument and logical precision as were English lawyers. Legal life and customs in Ireland at this period would form an interesting study.

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Ranelagh combined), which were opened in support of the Lying-in Hospital. Here concerts, masquerades, card-parties, and balls were held, the entertainments given during the winter being described by Malton as 'the most elegant amusements of Dublin'. In the Gardens in summer one could get tea, ices, and other light refreshments. There were walks and shrubberies, a spacious bowling-green, and a grand terrace upon which an orchestra played. The most fashionable time to visit the Rotunda was on Sunday evenings, when, we learn, the Rooms and Garden were 'prodigiously crowded'. De La Tocnaye when in Dublin in 1796 visited one of these promenades. He happened to be alone, and went round quizzing the company. The interesting remarks that he makes in his journal (omitted from the English translation) are characteristic of his nation.¹

Another centre of public entertainment was the Ranelagh Gardens, about a mile to the south of Dublin, which was opened as a place of amusement by William Hollister, an organ-builder from London, in 1766. He erected a burletta theatre there which he supplied with singers and an orchestra, and laid out the gardens in alcoves and bowers for tea-drinking parties.² At one time Lord Charlemont, the Duke of Leinster, and other fashionable people frequented the place, but by the end of the century it had been completely eclipsed by the Rotunda. Marlborough Green, provided with a bowling-green, orchestra, and tea-rooms, was another

¹ 'Les bonnes mamans étaient assez rares et semblaient distraites, les jeunes personnes au contraire étaient très nombreuses et semblaient occupées, en un mot je ne doute pas que cette Promenade ne répondit parfaitement à son objet . . . d'aider les couches des femmes. Des jeunes gens, un jour, y ont fait du tapage, et cela a fait cesser la Promenade.'—*Promenade d'un Français dans l'Irlande* (second edition, 1801), p. 26.

² The first balloon ascent ever attempted in Ireland was made by a Mr. Richard Crosbie, from Ranelagh Gardens, Dublin, on 19th January 1785. He made another ascent from the lawn of Leinster House, Dublin, in July of the same year. (See the *Gentleman's Magazine* and the *Hibernian Magazine*). A great deal of interest in 'ballooning' was taken in Ireland at this period. James Sadler made an unsuccessful attempt to cross the Irish Sea from the lawn of Belvedere House, Drumcondra (near Dublin) on the 1st October 1812, and his son succeeded in doing so in 1817. See F. E. Dixon on 'Ballooning in Dublin' in the *Dublin Historical Record* June 1955. Vol. XIV, i.

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favourite haunt, but this became unpopular with the wealthier classes after the summer of 1761, when the Earl of Westmeath's son was killed there as the result of a duel. A favourite promenade was the Beaux Walk, on the north side of St. Stephen's Green, which resembled that in St. James's Park, London, and was much frequented from about the middle of the eighteenth century up to the Union. 'Why don't you walk in the Green of St. Stephens,' wrote Swift to Stella from London as early as 1711, 'the walks there are finer gravelled than the Mall?'

At the end of the century the great ones of Society were fond of driving on the North Circular Road, which then marked one of the boundaries of the city. 'Upon that magnificent drive,' Lord Cloncurry tells us, 'I have frequently seen three or four coaches and six, and eight or ten coaches and four, passing slowly to and fro in a long procession of other carriages and between a double column of well-mounted horsemen.' This particular place, according to Lord Carlow, was the scene of both pleasure and gallantry. 'The Duchess of Rutland has her six ponies there every morning,' he wrote in a letter to his wife, 'Lady Antrim six more, and the other ladies as many as they can get for love or money. The Duke rides and as soon as he meets Lady Anne Hatton (daughter of the Earl of Arran) dismounts and walks with her.'

After the Union, when the Rotunda Gardens fell into decay, the Coburg Gardens, on the south side of Dublin, where what remained of the fashionable world had shifted, were popular for a time, but they were soon closed.¹ With the departure of the wealthy, Irish society had lost much of its brilliance. The people that had paraded on the Beaux Walk might have enjoyed the music that was provided by military bands on Sunday evenings in the Sackville Street Mall, but they would not, one fancies, have taken the same pleasure in their company.

'Here the rich and poor [says a scornful writer in the *Dublin Satirist* of November 1809], the gay and giddy of

¹ The Coburg Gardens, opened in 1816, were formerly the grounds of the town house of Lord Clonmell in Harcourt Street; they were later absorbed in Lord Iveagh's garden.

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each sex resort; here they take the dust by way of taking the air. . . . If a Munster or Connaught beauty arrives who is ambitious of admiration, where can she expose her charms with such effect as on the Mall? Should Charles . . . or any other gambler, by a lucky hit on Frederick . . . escape from . . . bad boots, or a threadbare coat into a curricle or dog-cart, where can he figure with such *éclat* as on the Mall? Where can my Lady M . . . ss, or Alderman . . . 's lady pick up fashions, or astonish the town with Cutpurse-Row caps, or Skinner's Row jewelry, so well as on the Mall?

The social change that passed over Dublin immediately after the Union is described by Miss Edgeworth in her novel *The Absentee*:

'From the removal of both Houses of Parliament, most of the nobility, and many of the principal families among the Irish commoners, either hurried in high hopes to London, or retired disgusted and in despair to their houses in the country. Immediately, in Dublin, commerce rose into the vacated seats of rank; wealth rose into the place of birth. New faces and new equipages appeared. People who had never been heard of before started into notice, pushed themselves forward, not scrupling to elbow their way even at the Castle; and they were presented to my Lord-Lieutenant and to my Lady-Lieutenant; for their Excellencies might have played their vice-regal parts to empty benches, had they not admitted such persons for the moment to fill their Court. Those of former times—of hereditary pretensions and highbred minds and manners—were scandalized at all this; and they complained with justice, that the whole *tone* of society was altered; that the decorum, elegance, polish and charm of society was gone.'

By 1812, the year in which *The Absentee* was published, however, 'the want of manners, joined to the want of knowledge,' in the *nouveaux riches* was beginning to disgust the public. Some of the old nobility and gentry who had been finding it hard to live on their incomes in London then returned. Chastened in spirit, they were glad to live a quieter and even more democratic life among their fellow-citizens than before the Union. 'To make the stranger eat or drink to

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excess,' says Miss Edgeworth, 'to set before him old wine and old plate, was no longer the sum of good breeding.'¹ The guest now 'escaped the pomp of grand entertainments.' Society was less convivial but more social.

Both before and after the Union the citizens of Dublin derived a great deal of pleasure from making excursions to the surrounding country. A favourite summer seaside resort, when O'Keeffe,² the dramatist, was young, was Ringsend. There was a very good tavern here known as the Sign of the Highlander, where the landlord provided excellent cockles, and billiards. The citizens were also much addicted to bathing, both on the North Strand and on the shore towards Blackrock. At the end of the century we learn that the roads in the neighbourhood were 'as much crowded with carriages as the most populous streets in the city.' A favourite inland resort was Leixlip, where at one time the sulphur waters were almost as much sought after as those of Lucan, a yet more famous spa in the same neighbourhood. According to a writer in the *Anthologia Hibernica*, a gentleman who apparently had nothing else to do one day in the summer of 1794 amused himself by sitting at his window from six o'clock in the morning till five o'clock at night counting the numbers of coaches, postchaises, jaunting cars, landaus, common cars, and people on horseback who passed on the Dublin road on their way to the spa. He estimated that (with pedestrians and vehicles from adjacent parts of the country) at least 12,000 persons must have visited Leixlip that day, attracted by the ac-

¹ Sir Jonah Barrington, writing in 1827, deploras the wit, pleasantry, good temper, and friendly feeling, of the former time, as well as 'the plentiful luxuries of the table and rich furniture of the wine cellar.' 'Everything is now changed,' he declares in his *Personal Sketches*, Vol. III, p. 306, 'that class of society is no more.'

² John O'Keeffe (1747-1833), dramatist, was descended from an old Catholic family and born in Dublin, where he was educated in the school kept by Father Austin, the Jesuit, in Saul's Court. He studied art in the Dublin school of design and then became an actor, acting with Mossop's company in Dublin for twelve years. He wrote many plays (most of which were produced at the Haymarket or Covent Garden), several of them being highly successful. In 1780 he went to London, where he became blind in 1797. In 1826 he issued his *Recollections*, which are full of social and dramatic gossip, but are not remarkable for their accuracy.

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counts that had been published of the wonderful cures effected by the waters.

When rakish gentlemen wished for congenial society they rode up to Mr. Conolly's hunting-lodge, perched like Noah's Ark on the top of Mount Pelier, among the Dublin Mountains. Here they were reported to drink heavily, indulging in blasphemous oaths, and amusing themselves with preposterous orgies. This may have been, as it is said, a haunt of the notorious Hell-fire Club, but most of the club's meetings were actually held in the Eagle Tavern, in Dublin.¹ Daly's Club House, which was opened in Dame Street in 1791, was a more respectable rendezvous, for it was the resort of the nobility and Members of Parliament. This house was decorated in a very rich style, being adorned with splendid chandeliers, inlaid tables, and marble chimney-pieces. The chairs and sofas were painted white and gold, and upholstered with rich silk coverings. At Daly's there was often deep play, the room being darkened occasionally in full daylight and candles lit to add to the sense of excitement. High stakes led to bad feeling, quarrelling, and duels, some of which took place on the spot.²

The 'itch for gaming' that characterized the Georgian period in Ireland was condemned by a hundred writers from Dr. Madden onward.³ A more harmless amusement was the

¹ The Hell Fire Club, into whose evil reputation a committee of the Irish House of Lords was appointed to inquire in 1737, was founded by Richard Parsons, first Earl of Rosse, and James Worsdale, the humorous painter, in 1735. There is a contemporary painting of the original members in the National Gallery, Dublin. Most of the hunting lodge, referred to in the text (which belonged to the Right Hon. William Conolly, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons), was removed in 1763 by Lord Ely of Rathfarnham to build himself a shooting lodge farther down the hill.

² There is an account of the opening of Daly's Club House on the 16th February 1791, in the *Hibernian Magazine* for March 1791. It originated in a chocolate house kept by Patrick Daly in Dame Street early in the reign of George III.

³ In an interesting letter dated December 22nd 1764, which appeared in the *Public Register* or *Freeman's Journal*, the writer laments the depravity of genteel society in Dublin. He makes a stirring protest against the 'extraordinary lust after drums and parties of cards' which had led to so much 'gaming and all knavish ways of filling the purse' that they had become 'a publick Nuisance.'

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private theatricals which were as fashionable as in England. Plays were acted everywhere by the gentry—in country houses such as the Edgeworths', and at the so-called Gentleman's Theatre in Dublin.¹ Luke Gardiner, later Lord Mountjoy, had a private theatre in the Ranger's Lodge, in the Park. There was a 'playhouse' in Aldborough House, and an 'attic theatre' in the Marquis of Ely's mansion. In 1761 we hear of *The Beggar's Opera* being performed at Carton—Lord Charlemont playing Peachum, and Lady Louisa Conolly making a successful Lucy. At Marlay, the seat of the La Touche family near Dublin, the *Masque of Comus* was acted. For this Grattan composed the epilogue, which was spoken by Miss La Touche, a famous beauty, afterwards Countess of Lanesborough. In the schools of Dublin, where many of the Irish gentry were educated, the same taste for plays and acting was in evidence. Edmund Malone, the Shakespearian critic, was educated at Roger Ford's school in Molesworth Street, where in 1749, Sir James Prior (writing in 1860) tell us, '*Julius Cæsar* was brought out in very good style, two of the Jephsons taking the parts of Brutus and Cassius; Marcellus, by the late Lord Lansdowne; Casca, by General Blakeney; Antony, by the late Rev. Thomas Robinson; Portia, by Richard Malone. Edmund was then too young [adds his biographer] to exhibit in public, but succeeded in due time to similar honours.' At a more famous school kept by Samuel Whyte in Grafton Street,² where Sheridan and Moore were both educated, plays were constantly performed. Whyte trained his pupils himself, and composed verses for theatrical occasions. In 1771 the tragedy of *Cato* was acted by his boys at Crow Street Theatre for the 'relief of confined debtors'. As important a personage as the Earl of Kildare appeared as patron. The band was composed entirely of 'gentlemen'. And the beautiful Miss Mont-

¹ A writer in the *Hibernian Magazine* of July 1789, refers to 'the fashion of acting plays which rages in Dublin like an epidemic at present.'

² Samuel Whyte, the Dublin schoolmaster, died in 1811. His son carried on his work, but the establishment, opened as early as 1758, felt severely the removal of many of the resident gentry and nobility from Dublin after the Union, and it had to be closed in 1824.

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gomerics, known in Dublin as 'the Three Graces', were responsible for the decorations.

The upper classes in Dublin were also noted for their love of music. A Music Hall was opened in Crow Street in 1731, and here concerts were given and subscription balls were held. In 1741 another was opened in Fishamble Street, to which the Charitable Musical Society, founded earlier in the century, transferred its meetings.¹ The proceeds of the concerts held here were distributed among the poor—chiefly the debtors in the prisons. The leading spirit in most of the musical entertainments was Lord Mornington,² who was a composer himself, and a performer on the violin and harpsichord. He was leader of the band at Fishamble Street, where he gathered round him a number of aristocratic amateurs. The Right Hon. William Brownlow played the harpsichord in his orchestra. Lord Lucan played the flute. The Earl of Bellamont was among the violoncellos. Besides these distinguished people, who performed for their own amusement and gave their services for charity, several notable professionals from England or abroad visited Dublin from time to time. Matthew Dubourg, the English violinist, was conductor of the Viceroy's band. Geminiani played and taught in the city for several years. This Italian composer had a house in Dame Street with a concert-room attached, and here he gave lessons which were much sought after. 'I often saw Geminiani,' writes O'Keeffe, 'he was a little man [with] a sallow complexion, black eyebrows, pleasing face—his dress blue velvet richly embroidered with gold.' Thomas Arne (the most eminent English composer of his generation), his wife, and their son Michael³ also gave numerous concerts in Dublin. Arne's own opera of *Rosamond* was performed there

¹ The Fishamble Street Music Hall was converted into a theatre in 1793 (see pages 201-2).

² Garrett Wellesley, first Earl of Mornington (1735-81), who was Professor of Music at Dublin University, 1764-74, was the father of Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington.

³ Michael Arne, a musical composer like his father, was an alchemist, and in 1776 took a house at Clontarf near Dublin to pursue his search for gold. In the summer of 1777 he was thrown into a Dublin prison for debt, and here he went on producing his music. He died in poverty in London in 1786.

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in 1743, and he conducted a notable performance of *The Beggar's Opera*.

The greatest event in the musical history of Dublin was the visit that Handel had paid there in 1741-2. He had previously been living in London, where his concerts were becoming neglected owing to dissensions in the musical world which had spread to fashionable circles. It was probably this which led him to accept the Duke of Devonshire's invitation to visit Dublin, and try out his fortunes in a new scene. To the Lord-Lieutenant's invitation was added that of the Fishamble Street Musical Society and those of a number of benevolent institutions who hoped to secure his services for their charities. He was willing to give the performances asked for, and is said to have composed his *Messiah* only a few weeks before his arrival in Dublin on 18th November 1741, expressly for this purpose. The first concert that he gave is described in Faulkner's *Journal* as follows:

'Last Wednesday, (23rd December) Mr. Handel had his first Oratorio at Mr. Neal's Musick Hall in Fishamble Street, which was crowded with a more numerous and polite Audience than ever was seen upon the like Occasion. The Performance was superior to anything of the kind in the Kingdom before; and our Nobility and Gentry, to shew their Taste for all kinds of Genius, expressed their great satisfaction, and have already given all imaginable Encouragement to this grand Musick.'

Handel himself gives a fuller account of this, his first reception by a Dublin audience, in a letter to his friend Charles Jennens, of Gopsall Hall, in Leicestershire, who had written for him the words of *The Messiah*:

'The nobility did me the honour to make amongst themselves a subscription for six Nights, which did fill a Room of six hundred Persons, so that I needed not sell one single ticket at the Door, and without Vanity the Performance was received with a general Approbation. Signora Avoglio, which [*sic*] I brought with me from London, pleases extraordinary. I have formed [found?] another Tenor Voice which gives

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great Satisfaction, the Basses and Counter Tenors are very good, and the rest of the Chorus Singers (by my Direction) do exceeding well; as for the Instruments, they are really excellent, Mr. Dubourgh being at the Head of them—and the Musick sounds delightfully in this charming Room, which puts me in such Spirits (and my Health being so good) that I exert myself on my Organ with more than usual success. I opened with the Allegro Penseroso and Moderato, and I assure you that the Words of the Moderato are vastly admired. The Audience being composed (besides the Flower of Ladies of Distinction, and other people of the greatest Quality) of so many Bishops, Deans, Heads of the Colledge, the most eminent People in the Law as the Chancellor, Auditor-General, etc., etc., all which are very much taken with the Poetry, so that I am desired to perform it again the next time. I cannot sufficiently express the kind treatment I receive here; but the Politeness of this generous Nation cannot be unknown to you, so I let you judge of the satisfaction I enjoy, passing my time with Honour, Profit and Pleasure.'

On 13th January 1742, Handel gave another performance for the benefit of Mercer's Hospital and the Charitable Infirmary, and by February 10th had given six concerts in all. He conducted these himself, being always assisted by Dubourg, who was leader of the band. Signora Avoglio and Mrs. Cibber, who had already made her reputation as singer and actress in London, were his chief vocalists, and in the great performance of *The Messiah* which was to follow the choirs of both cathedrals, St. Patrick's and Christ Church, took part. The first public rehearsal, which was given on April 8th, was reported by Faulkner's *Journal* as follows:

'Yesterday, Mr. Handel's new Grand Sacred Oratorio, called *The Messiah* was rehearsed at the Musick Hall in Fishamble Street, to a most Grand, Polite, and Crowded Audience; and was performed so well, that it gave universal Satisfaction to all present; and was allowed by the greatest Judges to be the finest Composition of Musick that ever was heard.'

The first public performance took place on the 13th, when

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the crowd expected was so large that the stewards of the Charitable Musical Society published a request that ladies would come without hoops and gentlemen without swords. The success of the concert, at which some 700 people were present (£400 being collected for charity), was complete. 'Words are wanting', we read in the *Journal*, 'to express the exquisite Delight it afforded to the admiring crowded Audience; the Sublime, the Grand, and the Tender, adapted to the most elevated, majestick and moving Words, conspired to transport and charm the ravished Heart and Ear.' Yet another performance of *The Messiah* was given on June 3rd, and this was equally successful. After this Handel remained for upward of two months in Ireland. He left Dublin on 13th August 1742, when he returned to London. He did not give a performance of *The Messiah* there until the following year, when he engaged Dubourg to come over as leader of his orchestra. This performance was coldly received by his English audience. It was not, indeed, until the oratorio was given for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital in 1750 that it succeeded in winning their approval.

From the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century it had been a custom to perform oratorios and cantatas in Dublin for the benefit of various charities. Mrs. Delany wrote to her sister in 1731:

'Monday being St. Cecilia's Day, it was celebrated with great pomp at St. Patrick's Cathedral. We were there in the greatest crowd I ever saw; we went at 10 and stayed till 4; there is a very fine organ which was accompanied by a great many instruments, Dubourg at the head of them; they began with the first concerto of Corelli; we had Purcell's Te Deum and Jubilate; then the fifth concerto of Corelli; after that an anthem of Dr. Blow's and they concluded with the eighth concerto of Corelli.'

As a result of Handel's visit the musical activities of Dublin were increased a hundredfold, and concerts of his music were given regularly up to the Union in Christ Church Cathedral, St. Werburgh's, and other Protestant churches. Towards the end of the century, as the laws against Papists were relaxed, oratorios were also performed in the Roman

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Catholic churches. We read, for example, of a solemn service given in thanksgiving for the King's recovery from illness in the archiepiscopal Chapel of Francis Street when the band consisted of more than 100 of the principal instrumental performers in the city, who accompanied a choir of forty singers. The congregation of 3,000 persons included many Protestants, and was, according to a writer in the *Hibernian Magazine*, 'the most brilliant and respectable that we recollect to have seen on any public occasion.'

For a time Italian music was all the rage in Dublin. Castrucci, who had acted as conductor of Handel's band in England, came over to Ireland in 1750. He gave concerts at the Rotunda, and must have been very popular with his Irish audiences, for his funeral, which took place in Dublin in 1752, was attended by such crowds that the parish beadle of St. Mary's, where he was buried, was crushed to death. Giordani, the Neapolitan composer, and his brother brought an Italian opera company over to Dublin in 1762, and performed with much success at Smock Alley Playhouse and at a little theatre opened for the purpose in Capel Street.¹ Lady Morgan's family was in touch with most of the distinguished musicians who visited Dublin towards the end of the century. She tells us that she knew Giordani, whom she describes as 'bewitched with the musical sympathies of the Dublin people', and also John Fisher, who was one of the first violinists of the age. Fisher came over to Dublin after a long tour in France, Italy, and Germany, where he had been visiting the Court of Frederick the Great. Lady Morgan describes his arrival at her father's house as follows:

'A foreign valet in showy livery bearing a magnificent violin case in crimson and gold which he deposited in the middle of the room, was followed by the entrance of the great professor, who stepped in on tip-toe dressed in a brown silk

¹ Lord Carlow wrote to his wife from Dublin on 20th December, 1783: 'I went this evening to a little theatre in Capel Street that is opened for English operas under the direction of Giordani. Leonie sings there, and a Miss Wheeler, who has studied at Venice and sings with some taste, but with a weak voice. The music is very pretty.' *Gleanings from an old Portfolio* (ed. Mrs. G. Clark), Vol. I (1895), p. 244.

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camlet coat lined with scarlet silk, illustrated with brilliant buttons, and a powdered and perfumed toupée so elevated as to divide his little person almost in two. His nether dress was fastened at the knees with diamond buttons, and the atmosphere of the room was filled with perfume from his person. He kissed my father [she adds] on either cheek, and my mother's hand with such fervour that she was left in doubt whether the gallantry were profane or indecent.'

Lady Morgan remarks that her father's 'joy', her mother's 'horror', and the servants' 'astonishment' at this scene all made a very striking tableau.

In Lady Morgan's time Sir John Stevenson had taken Lord Mornington's place as the *coryphæus* of the musical society of Dublin. He composed glees, operas, and sacred music, but is best remembered by his arrangement of Irish airs for Moore's *Melodies*. The young Moore, who was a disciple of Sir John's, was then being lionized in Dublin. The music of the time was naturally in the prevailing fashion. 'Ossian himself was not more graphic in his poems,' says Lady Morgan, 'than is Sir John in the music with which he illustrated many of them,' and when she and her sister went to a little musical party where Moore played and sang she tells us that her sister's tears 'dropped like dew', while she herself could not help being much affected. Irish music of the Gaelic variety was then being revived,¹ that of the blind poet Carolan—the last of the Irish bards—being especially popular. His beautiful airs had already been introduced into the ballad operas that were fashionable in the middle of the century, and by the time of the Union his music (of which a collection had been published in 1780) was in every one's hands. Harp-playing was then also much in vogue. Lady Morgan, of course, had a harp, and so had other ladies of fashionable sensibility.

Music, pictures, architecture, science, and agriculture—the gentry in Dublin interested themselves in all these things. But their main concern was with politics. Many of them sat in the Irish Parliament; a few took a hand in the pamphlet

¹ The stimulus to the study of old Irish melodies at this time was given by the publication of Walker's *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* in 1786.

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literature of the period; nearly all played their part in public events. The atmosphere of the Irish House of Lords was naturally more peaceful than that of the Commons.

'As a body [writes Barrington] the Irish Lords were not peculiarly prominent in the affairs of their country; but they were dignified. Their debates—until the accession of Lord Clare—were calm and temperate; and though like the members of all other political assemblies they were individually various in talent and character, the appearance of the whole was grand; and their conduct, if not spirited, was firm and respectable.'

In the Commons the presence of the Opposition party formed by Grattan, Flood, Curran, Walter Hussey Burgh, Edmond Sexton Pery, and others who assailed the Government on every feasible occasion, livened up the proceedings, and provided a scene that was eminently congenial to a vivacious spirit like Barrington. 'I looked around me', he wrote of his first day as a member, 'and saw the most dignified men of that day—the ablest orators of the period—many of the best-bred courtiers—and some of the most unsophisticated patriots in the Empire.'¹

In the first quarter of the eighteenth century Irish oratory was as simple and unrheterical as the prose of Goldsmith or Swift, but towards the end, as political feeling waxed strong—first on the question of the commercial restrictions, then on that of legislative independence, and finally on the Union—speeches became more unrestrained and imaginative, more copious and passionate. 'The orators of Dublin', wrote Horace Walpole to the Earl of Strafford on November 10th 1783, 'have brought the flowers of Billingsgate to so high perfection, that ours comparatively will have no more scent than a dead dandelion. If your Lordship has not seen the speeches of Grattan and Flood, you may perhaps still think that our oyster women can be more abusive than members of

¹ Lecky remarks that the members of the Irish Parliament had a good deal of ability and that the Irish debates compared not unfavourably in power and solid good sense with those of the English Parliament. See *The Debates relative to the Affairs of Ireland in the years 1763 and 1764*, published by Sir James Caldwell in two volumes in 1765.

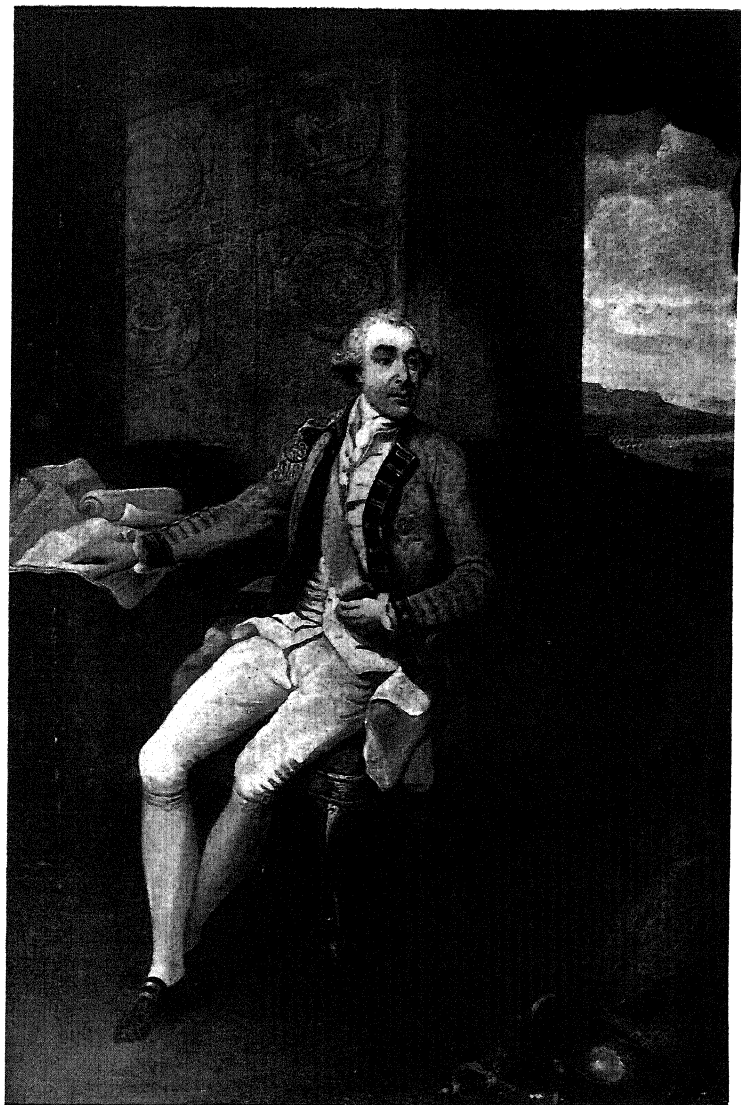
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Parliament.¹ This is all very well, but though Grattan's speeches may not have appealed to the fastidious Walpole, and are apt to jar on ourselves by their artificiality and lack of humour, they were greatly admired in their day, and were described even as late as the 1840's by Thomas Davis, a judge of good oratory, as 'the finest specimens of imaginative eloquence in the English, or any language'. Lord Holland tells us in his *Memoirs of the Whig Party* that Grattan's peculiar manner and style were much talked of in England, but that little was known there of his wisdom and wit. He describes the maiden speech that the Irish patriot made in the English Parliament in 1805, and the effect that it produced on his audience:

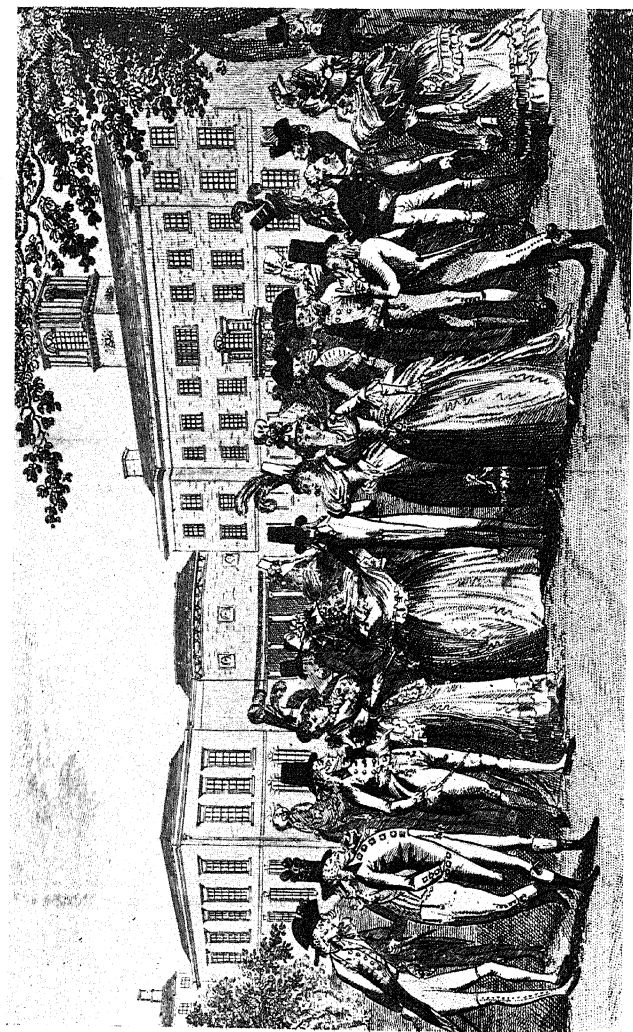
'When he arose curiosity was excited, and one might have heard a pin drop in that crowded house. It required indeed intense attention to catch the strange and long deep-fetched whisper in which he began; and I could see the incipient smile curling on Mr. Pitt's lips at the brevity and antithesis of his sentences, his grotesque gesticulations, peculiar and almost foreign accent and arch articulation and countenance. As he proceeded, however, the sneers of his opponents were softened into courtesy and attention, and, at length, settled in delight and admiration. Mr. Pitt beat time to the artificial but harmonious cadence of his periods, and Mr. Canning's countenance kindled at the brightness of a fancy which in glitter fully equalled, in real warmth and power far exceeded his own. Never was triumph more complete. . . . He was artificial in manner, in utterance, in pronunciation and style; and yet he breathed such a spirit of benevolence, such a warmth of feeling, and such sincerity of principle into all his speeches, that like Mr. Fox himself he won as much on the affections as on the understanding of his audience.'

The varying styles of Curran and Flood and of most other prominent Irish orators of the period are fully described for

¹ When Walpole spoke of the 'Billingsgate' language of Grattan and Flood he was referring to the famous quarrel in the debate of 28th October, 1783, after which a duel was averted only by the arrest of both orators. This was not their usual form, no doubt, but passionate oratory was not uncommon in the Irish House of Commons at this period.



JAMES CAULFIELD, FIRST EARL OF CHARLEMONT
From an engraving of a portrait by Richard Livesay, 1785



TASTE À LA MODE: THE ROTUNDA GARDENS IN 1790
From Walker's *Hibernian Magazine*, July 1790

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us in the life of Grattan written by his son. Whatever their merits or defects, they helped on the cause of national independence, and assisted Grattan to achieve the revolution of 1782.¹

Apart from the orators, the most shining character in Irish politics was Lord Charlemont, who, although opposed to Catholic emancipation, stood bravely for Parliamentary rights. He was so generally respected for his patriotism and integrity that he was chosen leader of the Volunteers in 1780.² And, although he disapproved of the feeling that developed for rebellion and for separation from England, he retained his popularity to the last. Hardy, his biographer, tells us that when his health broke down towards the end of his life and he left Dublin for Bath, 'the streets from Charlemont House to the river were completely thronged; all hung on his chariot wheels with looks of gratitude and attachment, and poured forth the most ardent prayers for his return.'

Some of the younger members of the Irish aristocracy did not share Charlemont's veneration for the British connexion or even his love of order—Lord Cloncurry, for instance, whose father was elevated to the peerage in 1789. He was definitely nationalistic, revolutionary, and anti-English. He tells us in his *Recollections* that his point of view as a young man in the years before the Union was that Irishmen had been mishandled, for they had merely developed into 'gigantic children'; being deprived of the 'wholesome stimulus of self-government', they had never been able to become 'men'. He wished to break the 'parasitic connexion' with England, in order that Ireland might 'put forth roots and branches sufficient for her own sustenance'. Cloncurry was

¹ A writer in the *Hibernian Magazine* of October 1785, remarking that the English had but an imperfect idea of the different talents and qualifications of the speakers in the Irish House of Commons, points out that 'the great men as orators' there were 'on the side of the opposition,' while 'the men of business' were 'on the side of the Government'. It was the ambition of nearly every Irish member to shine in oratorical effort. See an amusing story of the eccentric Lord Mountmorris told by Barrington in his *Personal Sketches* (1827), Vol. I, p. 118.

² See Grattan's praise of Lord Charlemont in the *Memoir* by his son (1841), Vol. III, p. 197.

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suspected of having joined the United Irishmen, and was imprisoned during the Rebellion of 1798 in London, where he was studying law. His views, which were very similar to those of his friend Lord Edward Fitzgerald, were certainly not shared by the bulk of his fellow-aristocrats. Lord Edward wrote to his mother in 1793:

'My differing so much in opinion with the people that one is unavoidably obliged to live with here does not add much, you may guess, to the agreeableness of Dublin society. But I have followed my dear Mother's advice, and do not talk much on the subject, and when I do, am very cool. It certainly is the best way; but all my prudence does not hinder all sorts of stories being made about both my wife and me, some of which I am afraid have frightened *you*, dearest Mother. It is rather hard, that when with a wish to avoid disputing, one sees and talks only to a few people of one's own way of thinking, we are at once all set down as a nest of traitors. From what you know of me, you may guess all this has not much changed my opinions; but I keep very quiet, do not go out much, except to see my wife dance,¹ and in short—keep my breath to cool my porridge.'

Robert Jephson, nephew of the dramatist, describes Lord Edward as he appeared to his fellow-citizens this very same year. 'He is turned', he says, 'a complete Frenchman, crops his hair, despises his title, walks the streets instead of riding, and thence says he feels more pride in being on a level with his fellow-citizens.' Considering the horror that the upper

¹ Sir James Prior in his *Life of Edmond Malone* (1860), p. 198, quotes a letter written in February 1793, written by Robert Jephson, nephew of the dramatist, in which he gives an interesting account of Pamela Fitzgerald: 'I was fortunate enough to get a sight of the celebrated Pamela, as I happened to be sitting with Lord Charlemont when they both came to see his library. She is elegant and engaging, I think, in the highest degree, and showed the most judicious taste in her remarks upon the library and its curiosities. The Dublin ladies, I understand, wish to put her down. . . . She promised Lord Charlemont with great good humour, to assist him in keeping her husband in order. She seems something about the size and figure of Mrs. (Scot?) but rather plumper. She was dressed in a plain riding habit, and came to the door in a curricule.'

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classes had at that time of 'French principles', it was no wonder that Lord Edward and those who thought with him were looked at askance.

Yet, looking back over the history of the rise of Irish national feeling in the eighteenth century, one realizes that it was certainly the gentry who had set the pace. First Molyneux, then Swift, then Berkeley lent Ireland their pens, while the Patriots in the Parliament had voted more often than not against the Government and supported national measures. Many of the Irish upper classes during the period, indeed, might have taken the favourite toast of Frederick Hervey, Bishop of Derry, as their motto: 'The Irish Harp new strung.' Before aristocratic ardour was cooled by the French Revolution it found outlet mainly in the Volunteer movement. 'The entire kingdom', writes Barrington, 'took up arms—regiments were formed in every quarter—the highest, the lowest, and the middle orders, all entered the ranks of freedom, and every corporation whether civil or military, pledged life and fortune to attain and establish Irish independence.' Barrington's father raised and commanded two regiments. His elder brother commanded the Kilkenny Horse. He was himself, he tells us, 'a red-hot patriot' and drew up resolutions for Volunteer regiments all over the country.

The Volunteers held several parades in Dublin, but none was so imposing as that which took place on 4th November 1779. The bells of the city were rung. Cannon were fired in relays. Nine hundred men paraded round the statue of King William on College Green with the Duke of Leinster at their head. 'The number of spectators on this occasion', according to a writer in the *Hibernian Magazine*, 'was almost incredible. Every avenue that leads into College Green was so crowded that all free intercourse subsided until the whole was over. At every discharge of the musketry repeated huzzas were given by the surrounding multitude.' After the ceremonies were over the various corps of Volunteers dined with the several commanders. The day concluded with 'the most superb illuminations.'¹

¹ The 4th of November was the birthday of King William. These parades continued till 1783, when the Volunteers were desirous of conciliating the Catholics. There is a celebrated painting by Francis Wheatley (see note,

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Lord Charlemont, who was moderate in his views, kept his head in the political whirlpool, but there were others who did not—that ‘eccentric and baleful comet’, Frederick Hervey, Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry,¹ for example. His entry into Dublin at the head of the Volunteers in November 1783 before they held their great Convention at the Rotunda has often been described. He sat in an open landau drawn by six horses surrounded by dragoons, and accompanied by bands of music, magnificently dressed in purple, with white gloves trimmed with gold tassels, and diamond buckles on his shoes, bowing right and left to the huge crowds which had gathered in the streets, like some monarch entering his capital. But this brilliant bishop, who spent most of his time in Italy, was not really interested in Irish politics. He enjoyed playing with fire, and indulged an unwholesome love of excitement. There were plenty of eccentrics like him in Ireland—Beauchamp Bagenal, for example, the first country gentleman to raise a regiment of Volunteers in Carlow. He had distinguished himself by his exploits abroad, which included a celebrated fencing match in Paris, the breaking into an Italian convent in search of a nun, and the abduction of a Spanish duchess. Barrington was present in 1780 when this gentleman held a grand review of his troops in his grounds at Dunleckny. In the evening, while the officers were being entertained at a ball, so much claret and whisky was served out to the men (for whom there was no room in the house) that they were quite over-

page 210) 5 ft. 9 inches high and 10 ft. 7 inches wide representing an important meeting of the Volunteers in College Green on 4th November 1779, now in the National Gallery, Dublin. For a description see W. G. Strickland, *A Dictionary of Irish Artists* (1913), Vol. II, pp. 520-1.

¹ Frederick Augustus Hervey, fourth Earl of Bristol, was Bishop of Derry 1768-1803. Although absent from his diocese for over twenty years, he was popular in Ireland, for he spent much money on public works, and advocated the relaxation of the penal laws against the Catholics, and parliamentary reform. He built two magnificent houses in Ireland, one at Ballyscullion, near Coleraine, the other at Downhill, in Co. Londonderry. These he filled with works of art, collected chiefly in Italy. He was notoriously eccentric, and respectable Englishmen in Rome avoided his society. He died at Albano in 1803.

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come and spent the night in confused heaps upon the ground, surrounded by empty bottles.¹

The Irish countryside provided plenty of space and opportunity for eccentric noblemen, but they were almost as plentiful in Dublin. Perhaps the most fantastic of those who figured there was Buck Whaley, in connexion with whom so many tall stories are told that only a few of them can be at all probable. Thomas Whaley (to give him his correct name) was a son of Richard Whaley, of Whaley Abbey, County Wicklow, and of St. Stephen's Green,² Dublin, who was member for Wicklow in the Irish Parliament between 1747 and 1760. His ancestors had settled in Ireland in the days of Cromwell, and in the course of time the Whaleys had collected so much landed property that they had grown excessively rich. At his father's death in 1769 Whaley inherited estates worth £7,000 a year, together with £60,000 in cash, but as he was still a child he remained at school until his mother sent him to France in charge of a tutor. He was initiated in Paris into all the fashionable vices, so that when he returned to Dublin in 1788 he was fully qualified for a life of extravagance and bravado. Being one night at a dinner-party at the Duke of Leinster's, one of the company happened to ask him to what part of the world he intended to go next. On the spur of the moment he replied, 'To Jerusalem.' This led to so many jests and sceptical remarks that the young buck offered to bet any sum that he certainly would go to Jerusalem, returning to Dublin within two years. In a few days he had actually departed, and, having won his bet, returned to Ireland in the summer of 1789.³ After defraying

¹ For the eccentric Mr. Beauchamp Bagenal see Sir Jonah Barrington's *Historic Memoirs of Ireland* (1833), Vol. II, pp. 26-30.

² Richard Whaley first lived at No. 77, now 87, St. Stephen's Green, and being envious of No. 85, designed by Cassels and owned by the Earl of Clanwilliam, built No. 86 between 1765 and 1766. There is an interesting account of these houses (Nos. 85 and 86), now restored and converted into a university club, in a pamphlet written by Mr. C. P. Curran and published by the President and governing body of University College, Dublin, in 1940.

³ Whaley reached Jerusalem on 28th February 1789. He went by Smyrna, Constantinople, and Acre, and returned by Cyprus and Marseilles. His journey covered 7,178 miles.

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his expenses he was left with £7,000 to the good—an incentive to further extravagance. On resuming his life in Dublin he is said to have engaged in various mad freaks, but the tale of his having jumped out of the window of his brother's house in St. Stephen's Green in order to kiss the occupant of a passing carriage is a myth. He actually accomplished this feat, however, later on—while staying in a hotel in Dover. It is true that during this time in Dublin he engaged in very high gaming, even for those times. When he was tired of the Irish capital he went to London. He was in Paris during the Revolution, and then travelled in Italy. Reappearing in Dublin for a season, he lost £10,000 at cards. But he had already spent most of his fortune, and was soon reduced, as he tells us, to selling his jewelry. He finally went to live in the Isle of Man, and it was there that he wrote his memoirs. These were chiefly intended to be a warning to others. He must have felt at the end that he had wasted his life, for he confesses that his 'tumultuous pleasures' had never purchased 'contentment' or even 'one hour's true happiness'.

One may make the acquaintance of many other strange persons in investigating the social history of this individualistic age. There were Kirwan, the chemist, eccentric President of the Irish Royal Academy, who allowed his books to overflow from his shelves to the floor and overwhelm his tables and chairs;¹ Thomas Pleasants, the wealthy philanthropist who never went to bed at night without placing his dead wife's slippers under his pillow, a peculiarity revealed in his will; and Richard Parsons, the wicked Earl of Rosse, who led a life of racket, brawls, and midnight confusion, and of whom many extraordinary stories are told.

The seclusion of the University offered a specially favourite retreat for odd characters. The most striking of these was 'Jacky' Barrett, who was Vice-Provost of Trinity between 1807 and 1821. Barrington describes him as 'a little greasy, shabby, croaking, round-faced' man who 'knew of nothing on earth save books and guineas—never went out—held but little intercourse with men—and none at all with women'. A

¹ See P. J. McLaughlin, 'Richard Kirwan, Chemist,' *Studies*, vol. xxviii (1939), pp. 461-74, 593-605; vol. xxix (1940), pp. 71-83, 281-300.

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fuller and more pleasing portrait of the Vice-Provost is given by Lever in *Charles O'Malley*:

'Dr. Barrett was, at the time I speak of, close upon seventy years of age, scarcely five feet in height, and even that diminutive stature lessened by a stoop. His face was thin, pointed, and russet-coloured; his nose so aquiline as nearly to meet his projecting chin, and his small grey eyes, red and bleary, peered beneath his well-worn cap with a glance of mingled fear, and suspicion. His dress was a suit of the rustiest black, threadbare, and patched in several places, while a pair of large brown leather slippers, far too big for his feet, imparted a sliding motion to his walk, that added an air of indescribable meanness to his appearance; a gown that had been worn for twenty years . . . covered his rusty habiliments, and completed the equipments of a figure that it was somewhat difficult for the young student to recognize as the Vice-Provost of the University. Such was he in externals. Within, a greater or more profound scholar never graced the walls of the college; a distinguished Grecian, learned in all the refinements of a hundred dialects; a deep Orientalist, cunning in all the varieties of Eastern languages, and able to reason with a moonshee, or chat with a Persian ambassador. With a mind that never ceased acquiring, he possessed a memory ridiculous for its retentiveness even of trifles; no character in history, no event in chronology, was unknown to him, and he was referred to by his contemporaries for information in doubtful and disputed cases, as men consult a lexicon or dictionary. With an intellect thus stored with deep and far-sought knowledge, in the affairs of the world he was a child. Without the walls of the college, for above forty years, he had not ventured half as many times, and knew absolutely nothing of the busy, active world that fussed and fumed so near him; his farthest excursion was to the Bank of Ireland, to which he made occasional visits to fund the ample income of his office, and add to the wealth which already had acquired for him a well-merited repute of being the richest man in College.'¹

¹ John Barrett (1753-1821), the son of a clergyman in King's County, became a Fellow of Trinity College in 1777. His publications included an astro-

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Lever himself in *Jack Hinton* gives an account of Dublin society as it was twenty years after the Union. The young guardsman staying at the Castle describes the worn furniture, broken chairs, and cracked marbles. Between 1795 and 1815 the average profits from the Assembly Rooms at the Rotunda had declined from £1,450 to less than £300. And Warburton, writing in 1818, declared that not only were the fashionable clubs no longer attended, but that claret had become almost as scarce as Tokay.

Before the Union 249 temporal peers, 22 spiritual peers, and 300 members of the Irish House of Commons had resided in Dublin. In 1821 only 34 peers, 13 baronets, and 5 members of the former House of Commons still lived there. Not that Dublin had sunk into complete dullness. There were still balls at the Castle, music in the churches, and reviews in the Park;¹ but henceforth it was chiefly a city of doctors, lawyers, and tradesmen, who had neither the inclination nor leisure to live like their predecessors.

An Englishman who came over to inspect Ireland just before the Union described the majority in the Irish Parliament as 'nothing but a tyrannous Junta which had entailed the country upon themselves'. The Irish upper classes in the eighteenth century certainly exercised undue preponderance, and not only in the political but in the economic and social spheres. Some of them were selfish and frivolous no doubt, but many of them had given services of a very high order to the country of their adoption. As a class they cannot be said to have had any national feeling in the sense that they were not prepared to admit the great Catholic majority to complete equality or to cut the cable with England. They must be judged, however, according to the standards of their time. If they were not democratic they were public-spirited.

logical work on the Zodiac, and an 'Essay' on the earlier part of Swift's life (1808). He edited 'Codex Z. Dublinensis Rescriptus', which he discovered while examining manuscripts in Trinity College in 1787. Owing to numerous eccentricities 'Jacky Barrett' was caricatured by a contemporary in a well-known print.

¹ See G. D. P. Allt., 'Irish Society as seen in the Novels of Edgeworth and Lever,' *Bulletin Irish Committee of Historical Sciences*, No. 10, February 1941.

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If they were not nationalistic they were cosmopolitan. There was no such thing as real democracy in eighteenth-century Europe. This was the 'Aristocratic Age' which received its death blow from France and the forces set free by the Industrial Revolution.

CHAPTER IV

Life of the Poor

The city of Quang-tcheu [Dublin] . . . is much celebrated amongst the Quang-tongese for its size and magnificence, and is supposed to contain 400,000 souls, but this cannot be; for, in that case, 200,000 of them must, of necessity, be hurdled [*sic*] together in extreme filth and misery, which, in such a polished and charitable age and nation, it is absurd to suppose.

JOHN WILSON CROKER, *An Intercepted Letter from J.-T., Esq.,
Writer at Canton, to his Friend in Dublin, Ireland* (1804)
(a satire on Dublin society, published anonymously)

Great exertions have been made, and are daily making, by humane societies and individuals, for relieving the Poor.

SAMUEL ROSBOROUGH, *Observations on the State
of the Poor of the Metropolis* (Dublin, 1801)

THE Rev. Thomas Campbell, an Irish clergyman who was acquainted with London, while praising the elegance of the fashionable parts of Dublin, remarked in his *Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland*, published in 1777, that 'the bulk' of the city was 'like the worst parts of St. Giles'. 'I must say,' wrote Mrs. Delany earlier in the century, 'the environs of Dublin are delightful, [but] the town is bad enough—narrow streets and dirty-looking houses.' And practically every other eighteenth-century visitor refers to the filth and squalor of the Dublin poor. 'Poverty, disease, and wretchedness exist in every great town,' wrote Curwen, an Englishman who made a tour of Ireland shortly after the Union, 'but in Dublin the misery is indescribable.'

The population of Dublin was variously estimated during the eighteenth century. Sir William Petty put it at 58,045 in 1682. Dr. Rutty, the Quaker physician who wrote *A Natural History of County Dublin*, estimated it in 1772 at

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128,570, while the *Post-chaise Companion*, published towards the end of the century, gives the figure as 300,000, which represented the popular view. In 1798 the Rev. James Whitelaw,¹ the charitable Rector of St. Catherine's Church in Thomas Street, determined to investigate the matter and to carry out a census of his own. With the sanction of the Government he took a number of assistants, and together they carried out a house-to-house search. This was not an easy task, for it occupied them ten hours a day during five successive months, and took them into the lowest and dirtiest quarters of the city. 'My assistants and I,' wrote Whitelaw, 'undeterred by the dread of infectious diseases, undismayed by degrees of filth, stench, and darkness inconceivable by those who have not experienced them, explored, in the burning months of the summer of 1798, every room of these wretched habitations from the cellar to the garret, and on the spot ascertained their population.' He put the total population of Dublin at 172,091, but considered that another 10,279 persons should be added if the soldiers in the garrison, the staff of the Castle, the inmates of various institutions, and the students of Trinity College were included. The return under the Population Act of 1814 was 175,319, which shows that Whitelaw was not very far out; it also shows that Dublin had at the time of the Union a greater population than any of the towns in England, London of course excepted.²

¹ The Rev. James Whitelaw, statistician and philanthropist, was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated in 1771. His most important service was his census of the City of Dublin, carried out 1798-1805. His most important work was his *History of Dublin*, in which he collaborated with John Warburton, Keeper of the Records in Dublin Castle. Neither lived to see the publication of this work, which was completed by Robert Walsh, at that time Curate of Finglas, Co. Dublin. Whitelaw founded several charitable institutions, the most useful of which was the Meath Charitable Loan (1808) for the benefit of unemployed members of the Coombe. He died of a malignant fever contracted from visiting his poor parishioners in 1813.

² The population of London, calculated from the parish registers of baptisms, was 674,350 in 1700 and 676,250 in 1750. According to the census returns of 1801 and 1811 it was 900,000 and 1,050,000 respectively. See M. D. George, *London Life in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 329-30.

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Petty had shown that the inhabitants of Dublin were 'more crowded and straitened in their housing than those of London,' and by the end of the century—judging from the account given by Whitelaw—the congestion seems to have grown worse. This was especially true of the districts known as the Liberties, most of which lay to the south-west of the river—in the oldest part of the city. Whitelaw writes:

'The streets [in this part of the City] are generally narrow; the houses crowded together; the rears or back-yards of very small extent, and some without accommodation of any kind. Of these streets, a few are the residence of the upper class of shopkeepers or others engaged in trade; but a far greater proportion of them, with their numerous lanes and alleys, are occupied by working manufacturers, by petty shopkeepers, the labouring poor, and beggars, crowded together to a degree distressing to humanity. A single apartment in one of these truly wretched habitations, rates from one to two shillings per week, and to lighten this rent two, three, or even four families become joint tenants. As I was usually out at very early hours on the survey I have frequently surprised from ten to sixteen persons, of all ages and sexes, in a room not 15 feet square, stretched on a wad of filthy straw, swarming with vermin, and without any covering, save the wretched rags that constituted their wearing apparel. Under such circumstances it is not extraordinary that I should have frequently found from 30 to 40 individuals in a house. . . . An intelligent clergyman of the Church of Rome assured me that number 6 Braithwaite Street some years since contained 108 souls. These however in 1797 were reduced to 97; and at the period of this survey to 56. From a careful survey twice taken of Plunket Street, it appeared that 32 contiguous houses contained 917 souls, which gives an average of 28·7 to a house, and the entire Liberty averages from about 12 to 16 persons to each house. . . .

'This crowded population [Whitelaw goes on to say] wherever it obtains is almost universally accompanied by a very serious evil—a degree of filth and stench inconceivable except by such as have visited these scenes of wretchedness. Into the backyard of each house, frequently not 10 feet deep,

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is flung from the windows of each apartment, the ordure and other filth of its numerous inhabitants; from which it is so seldom removed, that I have seen it nearly on a level with the windows of the first floor; and the moisture that, after heavy rains, oozes from this heap, having frequently no sewer to carry it off, runs into the street, by the entry leading to the staircase. One instance out of a thousand that might be given, will be sufficient. When I attempted in the summer of 1798 to take the population of a ruinous house in Joseph's Lane near Castle market, I was interrupted in my progress by an inundation of putrid blood, alive with maggots, which had from an adjacent slaughter yard burst the back door, and filled the hall to the depth of several inches. By the help of a plank and some stepping stones which I procured for the purpose (for the inhabitants without any concern waded through it) I reached the staircase. It had rained violently, and from the shattered state of the roof a torrent of water made its way through every floor, from the garret to the ground. The sallow looks and filth of the wretches who crowded round me indicated their situation, though they seemed insensible to the stench, which I could scarce sustain for a few minutes. In the garret I found the entire family of a poor working shoemaker, seven in number, lying in a fever, without a human being to administer to their wants. On observing that his apartment had not a door, he informed me that his landlord, finding him not able to pay the week's rent in consequence of his sickness, had the preceding Saturday taken it away, in order to force him to abandon the apartment. I counted in this style 37 persons; and computed, that its humane proprietor received out of an absolute ruin which should be taken down by the magistrate as a public nuisance, a profit rent of above £30 per annum, which he extracted every Saturday night with unfeeling severity. I will not disgust the reader with any further detail, and only observe that I generally found poor room-keepers of this description, notwithstanding so many apparent causes of wretchedness, apparently at ease, and perfectly assimilated to their habitations. Filth and stench seemed congenial to their nature; they never made the smallest effort to remove them; and if they could answer the calls

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of hunger, they felt, or seemed to feel, nothing else as an inconvenience. . . .

'In July 1798 the entire side of a house 4 storeys high, in School-House Lane, fell from its foundation into an adjoining yard, where it destroyed an entire dairy of cows. I ascended the remaining ruin, through the usual approach of shattered stairs, stench and filth. The floors had all sunk on the side now unsupported, forming so many inclined planes; and I observed with astonishment, that the inhabitants, above 30 in number, who had escaped destruction by the circumstance of the wall falling outwards, had not deserted their apartments. I was informed, that it had remained some months in this situation, and that the humane landlord claimed, and actually received for it, the usual rent. . . . The most dense population, as might naturally be expected, is found within the walls of the ancient city, comprehending the parishes of St. Werburgh, St. John, St. Michael, St. Nicholas Within, the eastern part of St. Audoen, and the Deanery of Christ Church. This space, containing an area of nearly 45 acres English, had in 1798, 15,683 inhabitants in 1,179 houses; which gives an average of 349 souls nearly to an acre, or 13.3 to a house. There were at that period 137 houses waste. The density of population however varies within this space; for St. Nicholas Within has only 215.5 to an acre, or 10.5 to a house; while in St. Michael's it amounts to 439 to an acre, and almost 16 to a house.'

The lack of sanitary arrangements was a noticeable feature of Georgian Dublin. For want of sewers the filth of the streets was received in cesspools dug before the doors of houses, then covered in. 'Many now remember', says a writer of 1847, 'the horrid sight and smell which periodically offended the inhabitants in [even] the most fashionable streets, when these Stygian pools were opened and emptied.' The overcrowding condition of many of the city cemeteries was another outstanding evil. Whitelaw writes:

'St. Mary's parish contains 16,654 souls and its churchyard about 32,000 square feet; hence the proportion for each inhabitant is not 2 square feet, and it is a fact, which I have witnessed, that in order to make room for others, bodies

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in that cemetery have been taken up in an absolute state of putrefaction, to the great and very dangerous annoyance of the vicinity. In some other cemeteries the evil is not so great; but in that of St. Anne's, it is, I am informed, if possible more distressing. . . . Why brothels, soap manufactories, slaughter-houses, glass-houses, lime-kilns, distilleries, etc., are suffered to exist in the midst of a crowded population I shall not presume to enquire. Their deleterious effects are abundantly known, and, I trust, will be remedied.'

The frequent flooding of parts of the city, especially the low grounds of the Liberties, by the Liffey and the underground river known as the Poddle, after heavy rains or the melting of snow, was another cause of unhealthy conditions. Sometimes whole streets were laid under water, and boats were employed, while people were occasionally drowned in the cellars of houses, or swept off the quays by the Liffey in flood.¹ The young Edmund Burke wrote from the family mansion on Arran Quay to his friend Richard Shackleton on 25th January 1746:

'No one perhaps has seen such a flood here as we have now, the quay wall which before our door is I believe about [?] feet high is scarce discernible, serving only as a mark to show us where the bank once bounded the Liffey. Our cellars are drowned; . . . the water comes up to the first floor of the house threatening us every minute with rising a great deal higher, the consequence of which would infallibly be the fall of the house. . . . From our doors and windows we watch the rise and fall of the waters as carefully as the Egyptians do the Nile, but for different reasons.'

¹ In the *Hibernian Magazine* for February 1784, we read of how a sudden heavy fall of snow, together with incessant rain, caused the rivers Liffey, Dodder, and Poddle to overflow, so that Ship Street, the Lower Castle Yard, and Dame Street as far as Sycamore Alley were laid under water, many kitchens and cellars being flooded; while the water rose to 6 feet in St. Patrick's Cathedral. In the same journal for November 1794 it is related how heavy and constant rains caused an inundation from the Liffey. Boats were employed in Patrick Street and Ship Street to rescue those who had retired to the upper floors of their houses, while people were drowned in the cellars of houses near the Castle, and others swept off George's Quay by the river in flood.

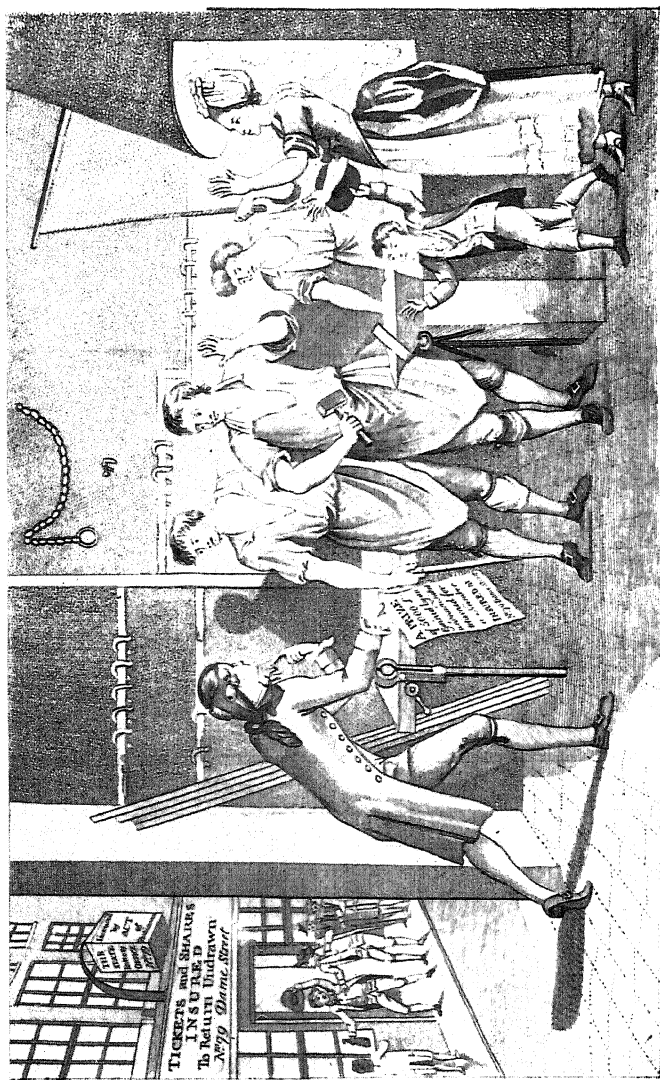
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Writing six days later, he says that the water in their house had soon abated, but that it was 'melancholy to see the poor people of the other parts of the town emptying their cellars, . . . for as fast as they teem out the water, so fast does it, through some subterraneous channels, return again.' One of the worst floods caused by the Liffey was in December 1801 when thirty-six hours' rain swelled the river to an extraordinary height, and one of the bridges was destroyed.¹

Whitelaw mentions the enormous number of dram-shops in Dublin licensed to sell raw spirits, which he describes as 'a poison productive of vice, riot and disease; hostile to all habits of decency, honesty and industry; and in short destructive to the souls and bodies of our fellow-creatures'. The excessive drinking in Dublin had for long attracted the attention of travellers. Barnaby Rich had written of the Irish capital in Elizabethan times that 'the whole profit of the towne stands upon ale-houses'; while Sir William Petty estimated that in Charles II's reign the number of ale-houses formed one-fifth of the total number of houses. By the middle of the eighteenth century this evil of drinking must have greatly increased, for, according to Dr. Rutty, there were then 2,000 ale-houses, 300 taverns, and 1,200 brandy shops in the city. The immoderate drinking of whisky seems to have begun about the year 1740. It was due not only to the wretchedness of social conditions, but to the low excise duty, which served to encourage consumption. The Government fostered the distilling industries for the sake of the revenue they brought in, and landlords wished also to reap benefit from the high price of grain, which reacted favourably upon their rents.

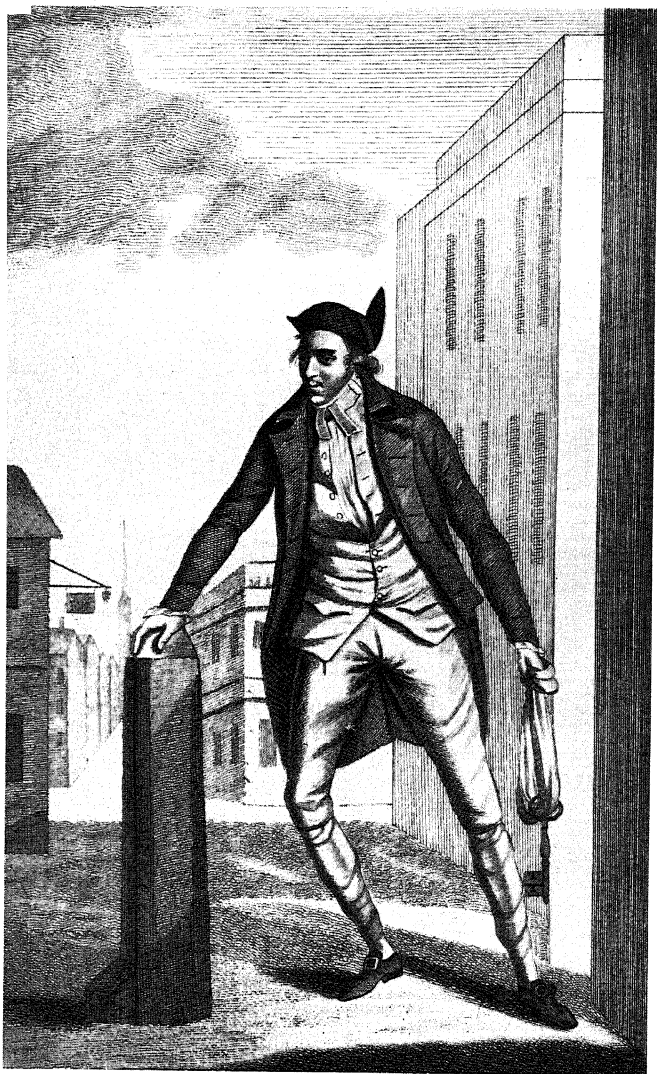
Nearly all the serious writers of the time condemn the excessive drinking of whisky as a great national evil, and many petitions were presented to the Irish Parliament asking for some restriction on the sale of spirits. The employers

¹ This bridge, which stood on the site of the oldest of Dublin's bridges, connecting Church Street and Bridge Street, was rebuilt in 1816 and called Whitworth Bridge, after the Lord-Lieutenant. In former times other Dublin bridges had been carried away by floods. Arran Bridge, for example, which was succeeded by the Queen's Bridge in 1768.



THE IRISH STATE LOTTERY

From a print entitled "The Fortunate Farrier" in Walker's *Hibernian Magazine*, June 1783



THE COLLEGE BUCK

From Walker's *Hibernian Magazine*, September 1774

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complained of the extent to which their businesses were being injured, and declared that in some trades the journeymen were idle half their time owing to intoxication. In 1788 the High Sheriff and Grand Jury of the county of Dublin in a petition to Parliament declared that the drinking of spirituous liquors had risen among the 'lower ranks of the people' to such an alarming degree that it had 'occasioned the loss of the health and lives of a great many; that it prevented the industry, and debauched the morals of the people; and hurried them into the most shocking excesses of riot and vice.'¹

Apart from this the fact that drunken persons were a frequent spectacle in the streets of Dublin must have given some food for thought. In the *Hibernian Magazine* for September 1782, for example, we read of how a poor woman who was hanging out linen to dry from a window in Garden Lane fell into the street below, breaking her leg and thigh and bruising her head in so terrible a manner that 'there are no hopes of her recovery'. Despite these injuries we learn that she was 'suffered to lie stunned by the fall' and to remain all night in the street, the unfeeling passengers supposing her to be merely intoxicated.

In 1791 the Irish Parliament made an attempt to remedy matters by raising the tax on spirits and lowering it upon beer, but this was only a temporary measure, for the Government was anxious to secure all the revenue it could lay its hands upon in view of the war with France. In 1811 the quantity of spirits charged with duty in Ireland had risen to

¹ Thomas Wallace wrote in his *Essay on the Manufactures of Ireland* (1798), p. 106, 'This manufacture [the distilleries of this kingdom] by producing ardent spirits in large quantities and at a cheap price, has emasculated the minds and enervated the bodies of the poor of Ireland. It has spread its poison through every quarter of the country; it has rendered poverty more miserable, and vice of all kinds more prevalent and more ferocious. Of manufactures it has been the bane. It has disinclined and disabled the workman to perform his work either with dispatch or accuracy; it has made him combine against his employer to extort the means of dissipation, and it has made him idle to spend them. In a word, it has filled our streets with beggary, riot and vice, has raised the prices, and spoiled the quality of our goods, and made the fertility of our island, instead of a blessing, a curse.'

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6,378,479 gallons, and by 1828 the consumption of home-made spirits was actually estimated at 11,775,067 gallons.¹

The drinking of spirits by lowering the vitality of the poorer classes made them particularly susceptible to fevers. Epidemics of fever were continually breaking out in Ireland at this time. There was a bad epidemic between 1728 and 1732, another in 1740-1, another about the time of the Union, and yet a fourth (which is generally held to have been the worst) between the years 1817 and 1819. It is said that in the two years following the month of September 1817 more than 42,000 persons suffering from fever were admitted to the Dublin hospitals. The mortality among these, and those that remained in their own houses, was very great; it has been surmised, indeed, that one in every eighty of the total population was carried off. In 1817 the outbreak of typhus seems to have been caused by unemployment and poverty after the war, a scarcity of provisions, and deterioration in the quality of food, following a bad harvest; and once it set in the overcrowded state of the houses, together with insanitary practices such as the sleeping of several in a bed and infrequent changes of clothing among the poorer classes, rapidly spread the infection. It was the opinion of Dr. Whitley Stokes, who was well acquainted with the conditions of the Dublin poor at the time, that sickness among them was due chiefly to dirt and to want of ventilation in their houses.

'An infectious fever [he wrote in 1799] is the principal disease, and it is well known to prevail most in the dirtiest lanes: thus the neighbourhood of the College and Park Place is more continually exposed to it than any other part. Indeed, I believe, there has not been a day since I began to practise, when that spot was clear of fever. I have seen there, three lying ill of fever in a closet, the whole floor of which was literally covered by a small bed, and when I opened the door, an effluvium issued, from which, accustomed as I am to such things, I was obliged to retire for a moment. The in-

¹ The average number of gallons of home-made spirits that paid duty in Ireland between 1729 and 1732 was 155,716. Between 1791 and 1795 the number was 3,732,631. Between 1795 and 1800 the bounty on the use of beer was discontinued and spirit-drinking again increased.

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habitants of Merrion Square [he adds] may be surprised to hear, that in the angle behind Mount Street and Holles Street, there is now a family of ten in a very small room, of whom eight have had fever in the last month.'

Stokes pointed out that sickness was 'a dreadful aggravation of the distress of the poor', for when it 'seizes on any two or three different persons of the family the rest are obliged to pawn their clothes and contract debts which they cannot pay for a long time after. When they recover, they may relapse for want of covering or be obliged to stay from work for the same reason. . . . The same cause [he pointed out] often prevents them from sending their children to school, and having them taught some method of earning their bread.'

Although special fever hospitals were opened in 1802 and 1804,¹ and Boards of Health established in 1818 to clean up foul courts and backyards, whitewash the houses of the poor, and disinfect their clothing, another serious epidemic broke out in 1826-7. This was so widely spread that, according to an account written by one of the doctors at the Meath Hospital:

'we were obliged to have additional accommodation for patients provided. Sheds were built, canvas tents were erected, their floors covered with hay, on which the crowds of patients conveyed to the hospitals in carts were literally *spilled out*. I have seen as many as ten patients lying on the hay waiting their turn to be attended to. In fact so immense was the number of sufferers that it became impossible to bestow medical care upon them all; indeed a large number of them got no medicine whatever, but all received reasonable care and comfort.'

On account of the unemployment in Dublin resulting from periodical trade depressions and poverty in the country caused by exorbitant rents and low wages the streets of the Irish capital were usually infested with beggars. 'In London', wrote an Englishman who was in Dublin in 1800, 'we have many sights of sorrow before us, but they are generally con-

¹ The Fever Hospitals were in Cork Street and Hardwicke Street.

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fined to certain parts of the town; whereas in Dublin they affect the eyes and ears and disfigure the beauty of this superb city everywhere.' 'You cannot stop in a carriage', wrote another Englishman (a distinguished member of the Viceregal staff) in 1772, 'without being surrounded by such crowds of importunate beggars that compared with Dublin the towns in Flanders are in that respect free from these nuisances.' Others tell us how the Dublin beggars crowded round the doors of shops assailing customers as they went in and out; and how they blocked up narrow entrances insisting on alms; and how even at night they would place themselves at street corners or upon the bridges, 'roaring with hunger,' as they called it.

'The carriages and apparent opulence of some of the first houses [in Dublin] form a striking contrast with the squalid poverty of the beggars [wrote De La Tournay in 1798]. They are posted near cellars, where they insist on charity and at the same time deprive the inhabitants of those dwellings of light; some are indeed so insolent that they seem to obtain by force what people would not be disposed to grant them willingly. These disgusting scenes harden the heart by degrees; I never felt less inclined to be charitable than whilst in Dublin.'

Many of these idlers were quite able to work, and pretended, as De La Tournay suggests, to be more wretched than they really were. It was seldom any use offering them food or clothing, for, as Swift pointed out (in a vigorous pamphlet published in 1737), 'they have in this Town been frequently seen to pour out of their Pitcher good broth that hath been given them into the kennel [gutter]; neither do they much regard Cloaths,' he adds, 'unless to sell them; for their Rags are Part of their Tools with which they work'. What they really wanted, as the Dean goes on to explain, was 'Ale, Brandy, and other strong Liquors', which could not be had 'without Money', and 'Money as they conceive, always abounds in the Metropolis'. Swift was the most charitable of men, but he regarded the beggars of Dublin with disgust, and describes them bluntly as 'Thieves, Drunkards, Heathens, and Whore-Mongers'. He considered that

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those that had come from the country should be whipped out of town, and returned as soon as possible to their homes.¹ Many of the Dublin beggars in his time, and, indeed, through the whole Georgian period, were not townsmen at all, but peasants from the country. These were generally seized with the spirit of wandering in summer, when the turf-cutting was over and the harvest had not yet begun. As this was the season when provisions were scarce and no employment was to be had, it gave the most favourable opportunity for taking the road to seek relief in the towns.²

In the eighteenth century Dublin, as well as London, had numerous elements of disorder, and riots and robberies were common.³ Many of the riots were caused by political events. When a union with England (always an unpopular proposition) was discussed in December of 1759, for example, the mob entered the House of Lords, and placed an old woman on the throne to show their contempt of the Viceroy. Sometimes they invaded the gallery of the House of Commons and made noisy demonstrations; occasionally they displayed the

¹ Swift makes indignant indirect reference to the beggars of Dublin in *Gulliver's Travels*. In giving an account of the visit of Gulliver with his nurse to the capital of Brobdingnag he describes how the beggars crowded round the sides of their coach, and 'gave me the most horrible spectacle that ever an European eye beheld.' In the pamphlet referred to in the text *A Proposal for giving Badges to the Beggars in all the Parishes of Dublin* he adds the following interesting information, 'whoever enquires, as I have frequently done from those who have asked me an alms, what was their former course of life, will find them to have been servants in good families, broken tradesmen, labourers, cottagers, and what they call decayed house-keepers; but (to use their own cant) reduced by losses and crosses, by which nothing can be understood but idleness and vice.' See T. K. Moylan 'Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars in Dublin,' *Dublin Historical Record*, Vol. I.

² See the evidence provided in the first *Report of H.M. Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Poorer Classes in Ireland* (1835).

³ There is some account of low life in Dublin about the year 1740 in *The Life and Uncommon Adventures of Captain Dudley Bradstreet*, by himself, published in Dublin in 1755 (edited by G. S. Taylor in 1929). Bradstreet (1711-63), the son of a landed proprietor in Co. Tipperary, was himself an adventurer and always in debt. After the rising of 1745 he was employed by the British Government as a spy. At one time he set up business as a linen merchant, later he experimented as a brewer.

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violence of their feelings in the theatre. In times of industrial depression those who imported English goods were ill-used; the streets often became dangerous, and troops had to be called out. On May 14th, we read in the *Dublin Evening Post* of 1734,

‘a mob of weavers of the Liberty rose in order to rifle the several shops in this city for English manufactures, and stopped at the houses of Messrs. Eustace and Lindsay, woollen drapers in High Street; who, having notice of their coming, shut up their shops—as did all the other woollen drapers—at their approach. They forced off the hinges of Mr. Eustace’s shop windows with hammers and chisels, but were prevented doing further mischief by the timely assistance of the sheriff and his bailiffs, whom the mob attacked. They then attacked several other shops of woollen drapers, but without committing any acts of depredation, except carrying off one small piece of English goods. Several were made prisoners in one house they broke into, and were sent to Newgate. They retired in a body to the Liberty, and threatened to pull down several houses if their associates who had been captured were not released. At length the army had to be brought against them, and a fight ensued, in which one of the weavers was killed. Large bodies of military are still parading the streets. From Tuesday to Thursday several engagements took place between the troops and the rioters; in one engagement seven were reported to have been killed, and nine wounded.’

The soldiers of the garrison did not always play their part, however, as preservers of the peace. The newspapers of the time give many examples of their drunken and disorderly conduct. In the *Hibernian Magazine* of 10th September 1778, we read:

‘Last Sunday morning about 3 o’clock five soldiers supposed belonging to the main guard forced an unhappy woman into an entry in Fishamble Street, and two of them guarded the pass alternately with drawn bayonets in their hands until each of the five had gratified his brutal desires. This piece of barbarity was transacted in the presence of

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above twenty spectators one of whom dared not venture to the poor creature's assistance; the military heroes threatening with horrid imprecations to stab the first person to the heart who should offer to molest them.'

The activities of the press-gang in the second half of the century also often led to disturbances, and sometimes to pitched battles. On several occasions the haymakers were attacked on the quays as they were going on board to take part in the harvesting in England.¹ At times it was merely the 'idle fellows' loitering in taverns who received the naval officers' attentions, at others respectable hackney coachmen or sedan chair carriers. We read in a Dublin newspaper:

'[On the evening of 21st June 1779] two sedan chairmen were impressed, and immediately after sent on board a tender lying in this harbour; and on the twenty-third a numerous body of people assembled before the rendezvous house on George's Quay, and were about to pull it down, being disappointed at not meeting the press-gang, who timely effected their escape, which the mob was greatly enraged at, and would have probably committed much violence and damage, had not the sheriffs, with a party of the guards, suddenly arrived at the rendezvous to protect it from their fury. The mob refused to disperse until a promise was made to them that the chairmen should be set at liberty and restored to their families.'

Robberies in the streets and vicinity of the city in the eighteenth century were a very frequent occurrence—so frequent, indeed, that in the second half of the period the inhabitants of various city parishes organized themselves into bodies to patrol the streets to try to prevent them. One may select extracts from contemporary newspapers at random. On 10th October 1785,

'as Lord Sudley was returning from town to the Earl of Arran's in the Phoenix Park between one and two a.m., he was stopped between the Park Gate and the late Bishop of

¹ See B. M. Kerr, 'Irish Seasonal Migration to Great Britain, 1800-38,' *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. III, September 1943.

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Limerick's house, by four men well mounted, and robbed of his watch and purse. . . . The coachman was so terrified that after they finished their business, he mistook his way and drove the carriage over a precipice. . . . Lord Sudley got his wrist strained—Lady Anne Hatton (who was with him) was not so fortunate, having her face dreadfully cut with some of the broken glass.'

Again on 11th March 1793,

'as the coach of Mr. Bateman of Merrion Square was returning from the play in Fishamble Street with Mrs. R. Bateman, his daughter-in-law, Miss Jane Bateman, and Miss Douglas of Denzille Street, at about half after 12 o'clock, the coach was stopped in Park street near Westland Row, by a number of men armed with pistols, one of whom (while two stood at each door) opened the coach door and went in with a pistol in his hand and took from Mrs. R. Bateman her diamond hoop ring and some silver, and from Miss Douglas a gold enamelled watch.'

Robberies and outrages in Georgian Dublin were not confined to the streets—private houses were frequently entered in full daylight, the occupants threatened with pistols, and plate and other valuables stolen.¹ Churches were often robbed of candlesticks and other portables, panels in shop-windows were broken and the goods removed, children were kidnapped from their parents for the sake of their clothes and turned out naked into the streets, people were murdered for the sake of rings and watches and found up dark alleys or floating in the river.

Writers in the Irish newspapers were careful to point out that many of the footpads and other undesirables in Dublin

¹ In the *Hibernian Magazine* for February 1775 we read of how a man in a handsome suit came in a sedan chair to a house in Dominick Street, Dublin, and, demanding to see the lady of the house, took a pistol out of his pocket, put it at her breast, demanded her watch and purse, and then made off. And in the same journal for August 1779 it is recorded that fifty men broke into a house at Milltown, Co. Dublin, and carried off all the plate. They fired shots into the house, and broke the furniture.

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were well dressed and spoke with 'English accents'. We read in the *Hibernian Magazine* for February 1790:

'Dublin at this moment swarms with a flight of English sharpers—adepts in the mysteries of their profession, and general professors in the arts of shop-lifting, pocket-picking, ring-dropping, swindling, and coining. They assume all shapes and appearances — clergymen — farmers — horse-jockies—agents—riders—and are straight or deformed, young or old, lame or otherwise just as occasion suits.'

It may be surmised that the police system of Dublin during the eighteenth century was not very efficient. The streets were supposed to be guarded at night by watchmen armed with bills and lanthorns, but as these were often appointed by the parishes from motives of charity they were sometimes old and infirm. There are frequent accounts in the newspapers of attacks made upon them at their 'stands' in which they were severely wounded, and one may be sure that they were neither able nor willing to risk life or limb by running after dangerous characters. The narrowness of many of the streets, the rough way in which they were paved, the inadequate lighting of the town, must all have hampered them in their movements. In 1809 a Paving Board was established which erected lamps, made sewers, paved streets, and cleaned them. And in 1808, during Sir Arthur Wellesley's Chief Secretaryship, a more efficient police system was established. The city was divided into departments under a chief magistrate whose headquarters were at the Castle, and the streets were patrolled by constables who saw that the watchmen were doing their work effectively. The result was that street robberies and other outrages greatly diminished, as is shown by the decrease in the number of executions and the evidence of visitors to Dublin.

The state of the prisons in Dublin during the Georgian period was no better than elsewhere, and may easily have been worse. The chief of these were the Newgate, situated in the old Corn Market; the Sheriff's Marshalsea, known as the Black Dog, in Newhall Market near by; the Four Courts Marshalsea, off Thomas Street, built in 1775; and the New Prison, which was erected in the Little Green, to the north of

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the city, between 1773 and 1780. 'I preached at Newgate,' wrote John Wesley in his *Journal* on 23rd March 1748, 'but found no stirring at all among the dry bones.' We cannot wonder that Wesley's efforts to convert the prisoners did not meet with success in view of the terrible sufferings that were forced upon them. In 1729 the Irish House of Commons had appointed a Committee to inquire into the state of the gaols, and in the report presented by this body an account is given of some of the abuses that prevailed. The keeper of the Black Dog drove a great trade, we learn, by 'vending liquors to the prisoners', which was the 'foundation of severe extortions and oppressions'. Every one who entered was forced to pay 2s. 2d. for a 'Penny Pot', whether he wished it or not. Those who refused to pay this sum were violently beaten and their clothes taken from them. One man who had no money, according to the evidence received by the committee, was knocked down with such violence that his periwig was torn from his head and 'the blood gushed out of his ears'. No one was allowed out of the prison without a fine; and those who could not pay were treated with 'great inhumanity and barbarity'. In the Black Dog there were only twelve rooms; some of these were mere 'closets', the rest contained several beds in which from three to five prisoners were forced to sleep. For this accommodation they had to pay a shilling a night, and if they could not pay were thrown into an underground room known as the 'Nunnery'—so called because it was there that strolling women arrested by the watch were confined. This dungeon was twelve feet square and eight high, very damp, and with no light but what came through a common sewer which ran close by and carried off the filth of the prison. Sometimes as many as twenty persons were crowded into this place, where they were often robbed and abused by the criminals who were shut up with the debtors. The stench of the room was so frightful that the members of the Committee state that they were unable to remain there any longer than was necessary to take its dimensions.

In Newgate Prison, where persons were sent for 'assaults, trespasses, and other petty crimes', 1s. 4d. was demanded for a 'Penny Pot', and 4d. for 'not being thrown into the Felon's Room'. In this persons suffering from fever were often

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placed, so that those who could not pay the fees ran every risk of infection. Here the members of the Committee saw 'a multitude of wretched objects laying naked on the ground perishing with cold and hunger'. The stench of the place they reported to be so 'overpowering and insupportable' that they could not remain in it for longer than half a minute. The Irish House of Commons seem to have reformed the abuses as far as possible, but in 1767 a Parliamentary Committee reported on the prisons that they were still in a very bad condition—infested with gaol-fever and horribly overcrowded.

In 1775 and 1776 John Howard,¹ the philanthropist, visited Dublin, and returned there again in 1787 and 1788. At Newgate Prison he found that there were no proper drains or baths. He saw boys from nine to twelve years of age shut up with 'the most daring offenders', and women lying on flagstones 'with a very little straw worn to dust'. Here some cases of death among the prisoners 'from intoxication and fighting' were reported to him. He found the Four Courts Marshalsea dirty and overcrowded. On the night before one of his visits he learned that many had been 'gambling, drinking, and fighting'. In some of the rooms debtors were selling whisky; in one room there was a pawnshop. Of the New Prison he reports that it also was dirty. There was no regular water supply, because the pumps were out of order. There was no bedding, although the floors were of stone. Men and women were confined together, and petty offenders and abandoned criminals were not separated. No proper attention was paid to the sick. Favoured prisoners were allowed to monopolize the day rooms for 'tennis and other diversions'; some were even permitted to act as turn-keys. Money was exacted as in the older prisons for the 'Penny Pot', and a great deal of whisky was consumed. Al-

¹ John Howard, who was High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, visited county and city gaols and bridewells in England, and obtained Acts for the abolition of gaolers' fees and for sanitary improvements, in 1774. He inspected Scottish, Irish, French, Flemish, Dutch, German, and Swiss prisons in 1775-6, and visited Denmark, Sweden, and Russia in 1781. He visited lazarettos in France, Italy, and Turkey in 1785-6, of which he published an account in 1789. The first edition of his *State of the Prisons* was published in 1777. He died of camp fever while with the Russian army at Kherson.

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though the authorities had been impressed by the reports made by Howard, the account of the state of the Irish gaols published by the Commissioners who visited them in 1808 does not show any very marked improvement. Prison reform, in Ireland as in England, was not taken seriously in hand until at least twenty years later.

The Poor Law system of England was not extended to Ireland until 1838, but that does not mean that no provision had been formerly made for the poor. In 1703 an Act was passed for the erection of a Workhouse in Dublin, to which vagabonds and beggars were to be brought for relief, and if able-bodied set to work. Deserted infants and children found begging were maintained here, and when old enough were placed as apprentices by indenture in trade, or found employment as sailors or domestic servants. In 1758 an Inquiry was held by the Irish House of Commons into 'the state and management of the Fund of the Workhouse of the City of Dublin', and from the statements of witnesses as printed in the Report the reader may form his own conclusions. According to the spinning mistress appointed by the Linen Board to instruct the children, most of the windows and some parts of the roof were open to wind and rain. She noticed that the children's feet were swollen and blistered with the cold; their hands also were so 'swelled' and 'thick with itch sores and scabs' that they were often unable to draw the thread. She added that they were so dirty that she sometimes had to strip herself after her work was over in order to shake the vermin out of her clothes. She declared that the children were inadequately fed, and that the food that they got was badly cooked. The porridge was full of lumps, and sometimes contained such unappetizing objects as 'crickets and clocks'. Two of the physicians attached to the institution declared the infirmaries and nurseries to be extremely 'dirty and offensive'. They had been asked to attend as many as four children in one bed, those dying with fever lying side by side with healthy infants. If they ordered broth and whey to be given buttermilk or small beer was often provided as a substitute. The beds were without sheets. The nurses were dirty and inefficient. This perhaps was not to be wondered at, as we learn from the chaplain's report that

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these women sometimes had as many as thirty children at a time to look after. The Committee, finding 'so many things which wanted regulation' in the Workhouse, determined to confine themselves to a consideration of the 'œconomy' of the foundlings. They recommended a number of reforms: the dietary was to be improved; sheets were to be provided for the beds; the wages of suckling nurses were to be raised; and the infirmaries were to be put into 'more decent order'. But, as it had been discovered in addition to the other abuses that some of the children had for 'trifling faults' been severely 'corrected and whipped', and even thrown into the cells of the madmen, they recommended that the foundling part of the establishment should in future be separated from the Workhouse and put under different officers. The establishing and supporting of a well-regulated Foundling Hospital in the City of Dublin would indeed, they declared, be 'an excellent charity highly beneficial to the Publick, and greatly promote the Protestant interest of this Kingdom'.

In 1772 the Workhouse was definitely divided into two parts—the House of Industry and the Foundling Hospital. The House of Industry, established apparently on the suggestion of Dr. Woodward, Bishop of Cloyne, who had published *An Argument in Support of the Right of the Poor in Ireland to a National Provision* in 1768, and maintained that the 'nuisance of beggary' in Dublin was 'grievous beyond the experience of other great cities', was situated in Channel Row, to the right of Oxmantown Green, on the north side of the river.¹ The Foundling Hospital, which had always formed part of the Workhouse, was in James's Street, west of the City Basin: it formed part of what is now known as the South Dublin Union.

The House of Industry was for the support of the helpless poor, and in it were confined those able to work and committed as vagabonds and sturdy beggars, as well as idle and strolling women who were removed from the streets. Later sick and insane persons were admitted, and an asylum for children and a penitentiary for boys added. The place was

¹ See two articles by T. K. Moylan on 'The Beginnings of the House of Industry', and 'Dublin's Debt to the House of Industry' in the *Dublin Historical Record*, for March 1938, pp. 41-9, and September 1938, pp. 65-74.

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supported by subscriptions, donations, and charity sermons, and later received grants from the Irish Parliament. By 1803 the number of admissions had reached the substantial figure of 4,468; the average number in the House being about 1,313. Not all of these, of course, were inhabitants of Dublin. The House of Industry attracted applicants from all over Ireland.¹

The place was not at all popular with the Dublin poor. During and after the Napoleonic War, when there was a great deal of unemployment and distress and the price of provisions was high, they came voluntarily in their hundreds to seek relief; but in the days before the Union, as the Black Cart of the institution went on its rounds collecting strolling beggars from the streets in order to compel them to seek work and shelter, riots sometimes broke out. We read in the *Hibernian Magazine* for March 1780:

‘Between 6 and 7 o’clock at night a most alarming affray was occasioned in the Mall, by the inquisitorial procession of the Black Cart, and the confinement therein of an old creature, whom the populace of the neighbourhood did not wish to see exhibited as a *san benito*. The consequences were dreadful; a number of persons were mortally wounded by the incessant fire kept up by the persons who accompany the Cart in arms. Innocent people as usual suffered most on the occasion. A harmless female servant received a mortal wound on the temple. Two young boys were dangerously wounded with many others. The Black Cart guard suffered exceedingly, and the Cart itself was completely demolished.’

The House itself was not remarkable for its comfort. The diet was poor, being made to correspond to ‘the lowest rate of wages by which the industrial labourer can subsist in his own habitation’; the dormitories were cold; and nothing was given away that could easily be ‘commuted’ into spirituous liquors. Howard, however, reported favourably on the place in 1782. He declared that ‘the House, infirmary, and cells for lunatics’ were clean, and the numerous inhabitants ‘quiet

¹ In a report on Dublin Charities published in 1809, out of 6,145 persons admitted in 1807 to the Dublin House of Industry 3,075 were from the country. By 1830 there were twelve Houses of Industry in Ireland of which that in Dublin was chief.

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and orderly'. Between 1781 and 1782, 2,819 persons had entered voluntarily while 460 were 'compelled'. In 1807, a year of unusual distress, 6,145 persons were admitted—the average number in the House being 1,862. In a report on the charitable institutions of Dublin which received aid from Parliament published in 1809 it is remarked that the House of Industry had 'only succeeded moderately in its original object'—the suppression of beggary. The principal advantage derived from the institution, we learn, had been 'the relief of the aged and infirm, and of those who laboured under temporary distress from want of employment'.¹

The declared object of the Foundling Hospital was the preservation of the lives of deserted or exposed infants by their indiscriminate admission from all parts of Ireland, putting them out to nurse in the country until they were of a proper age to be drafted into the Hospital, and educating them there in such manner as to qualify them for being apprenticed to trades or as servants, and thus rendering them useful members of society. The greatest 'object' of all, however, was to make good Protestants of the foundlings, for, as was pointed out in a Petition presented to the Irish Parliament, the Hospital was 'a charity particularly suited to this Kingdom, situated in a Metropolis abounding with Papists of the lowest rank'. As a matter of fact, there were not always enough Protestant nurses to go round, and Catholic women had often to be found for the infants. As they grew up the children frequently 'imbibed Catholic principles', and either refused to return to the Hospital or 'eloped' during different stages of their subsequent career.

Thousands of newly born infants were annually carried up to Dublin by professional foundling carriers. Since the mode of transport was to place either eight or ten children in a kish, or basket, on the back of the carrier or his horse or in his cart without springs, it was no wonder that many died on the road or

¹ In a Report addressed to the Marquis of Wellesley, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, by Elizabeth Fry and Joseph J. Gurney respecting their late visit to that country in 1827, while criticizing the general conditions of the poor in Ireland, they praise the Irish Houses of Industry and especially that of Dublin, as being superior to the workhouses in England, in cleanliness, comfort and order. The English Poor Law had not yet been introduced into Ireland.

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came into the Hospital with their limbs fractured. In Dublin itself the foundlings were often laid down on the banks of the Canal adjoining the Hospital, where many of them died of exposure or were drowned; but the more usual method was to place them in the cradle with 'turning-wheel' that was provided at the gate of the institution 'for use either by day or night'.¹

The Dublin bills of mortality (the records of burials and baptisms kept by the parishes), although very imperfect,² show that the death-rate in the city in the eighteenth century was high. Before the opening of fever hospitals the wards of the House of Industry were the chief resource of the destitute sick, and in these there was always a high mortality. In the Foundling Hospital, however, the death-rate was higher still. It may be described, indeed, as truly appalling. In London between 1745 and 1756 the death-rate among the foundlings was about 50 per cent, but after 1760 the deaths were reduced to one in four, and at the end of the century to one in six. Between 1784 and 1796 out of 25,352 children entered on the books of the Dublin institution 17,253 died, either in the Hospital itself, or in the country where they had been put out to nurse.

These figures were revealed by a return prepared by a Committee appointed by the Irish House of Commons at the instance of Sir John Blaquiere, then member for Charleville, County Cork. He had collected some statistics on his own account, and drew the attention of the House to the fact that the Foundling Hospital was costing the country some £16,000 a year. The House of Commons was so horrified by the information provided, both by Blaquiere and by the Committee it had itself established, that it promptly appointed a sub-committee to carry out a detailed inspection. This body reported on 11th April 1797, that in the Foundlings' nursery they had inspected sixteen infants. Those who had been only a few hours in the House appeared healthy and strong, the rest were seemingly 'exhausted and neglected'.

¹ See M. Hayden, 'Charity Children in 18th Century Dublin', *Dublin Historical Record*, Vol. V, March-May 1943, pp. 92-107.

² The births and deaths of Roman Catholics were not registered. Many Protestants were baptized in private houses, and many of the poor were buried in cemeteries outside the city boundaries. In any case, the parish registers which were started in Dublin in 1662 were badly kept.

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All the children except one were confined to their cradles, although most of them were awake. In the infirmary, described as a 'black and gloomy apartment', they observed eighteen infants lying three and four together in filthy cradles, their covering being insufficient to 'preserve vital heat in the bodies of infants at an inclement season and remote from fire'. Although a physician, surgeon and apothecary were attached to the institution, the Committee could not observe that the least efforts were being made to save the infants' lives, and, passing some remark to the Matron upon their miserable condition, were shocked to receive the response that the children were 'laid there to die'. The Committee conclude their report with an expression of their regret at the necessity of 'stating facts which carry a complexion of more than savage cruelty', and remark that 'remedies for such pernicious evils cannot be too speedily applied'.

The Irish House of Commons immediately adopted the suggestions of their Committee. The number of Governors was reduced, and thirteen 'Lady Governesses', among whom were the Duchess of Leinster, the Countess of Altamont, and Lady Castlereagh, were appointed to help in the work of reform. The cradles, which were found to be alive with vermin, were burned; the filthy yards at the back of the House were cleaned; fresh supplies of bedding and clothing were bought; and new dietaries (from which beer was excluded) were prescribed, both for children and nurses. For a time the rate of mortality was reduced, but the figures soon mounted again, until the Foundling Hospital was finally closed in consequence of a report issued by the Commissioners of Irish Education which gave a severe shock to public opinion. In this it was stated that out of 52,150 children admitted to the Hospital in thirty years (25th June 1796—5th January 1826) 41,524 had been returned as 'dead' in the books.¹

¹ Of the 25,859 children returned as having 'died whilst at nurse in the country' certificates of death had been actually received at the hospital for only 16,237, leaving 9,622 children to be accounted for without any proof of their death. The Commissioners suggest that some of these may actually have 'been retained by their nurses', and others 'grown up to maturity and taken their station in society without the knowledge or assistance of the Governors of the Hospital.'

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The founders of the Hospital and its subsequent supporters had believed that by providing a place where mothers might deposit their unwanted offspring in safety the exposure, death, and actual murder of illegitimate children would be prevented; but Malthus had cast doubts on the wisdom of maintaining such establishments, and we find Wakefield, the philanthropist, author of *An Account of Ireland, Statistical and Political*, writing in 1812, 'I consider an hospital that presents an open basket to receive every infant without distinction, as one of the greatest national evils that can be devised by human ingenuity; even if well conducted it holds out encouragement to all kinds of vice'. This view was finally adopted by the Governors of the Hospital themselves, for, as the writer of the Report on the Hospital published in 1826 truly observed, it was 'evidently the design of Providence that the infancy of children should be superintended by their parents, and that a great departure from this principle (however unavoidable it must be with respect to foundlings) will be attended by circumstances of an untoward and perplexing nature'.

There was plenty of philanthropic effort in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, but little sympathy with the sufferings of the poor or understanding of the problem of poverty. The poor were looked upon as 'the inferior part of mankind', and it was believed that they should accept their subordinate position in the same way that the rich accepted their social superiority and the wealth that God had bestowed upon them. Charity was thought, however, to be eminently desirable. It ennobled the rich and satisfied their vanity; it also helped to keep the poor from dangerous rioting and that irreligious discontent which was bad for the country as a whole, for it threatened the foundations of a well-ordered society. Charity schools were supported in order that gentlemen might be provided with honest and useful servants; workhouses to lessen the risk of riot and disturbance by thinning out beggars and thieves; hospitals that disease might be focused and the general spread of infection prevented. If the poor were poor it was generally held to be their own fault—hence the unsympathetic attitude towards beggars. Little attention was given to unavoidable unemploy-

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ment, high prices, and low wages; the emphasis was laid rather upon the vices of the 'inferior' classes—dishonesty, laziness, and drunkenness.

As the eighteenth century wore on, however, the philanthropists felt a certain dissatisfaction with the results of their efforts, for they seemed to have done little either to content the poor or to improve their position. Together with these practical considerations went a growing belief that the poor might be poor, but should not be blamed entirely for their poverty. They were, indeed, largely the victims of circumstance, and, in any case, were men and perhaps even brothers. It was the growth of the Religion of Sentiment under the influence of Rousseau and his school, together with the principles of the French Revolution, which put a new spirit into philanthropic effort towards the end of the eighteenth century. At the same time the growing interest in science, characteristic of the age, led to fuller and more accurate knowledge. This soon showed itself in greater efficiency in handling the problems of poverty.

The Irish gentry, in touch with the stream of feeling elsewhere, naturally followed the example of English philanthropists. In the early part of the century their motives in helping the poor were as mixed, their methods in dealing with them were as clumsy. As time went on, however, they too became subjected to the same generous influences. They became more altruistic, more active, and more efficient. The Charter Schools (founded under the auspices of Primate Boulter) illustrate most of the faults of early eighteenth-century philanthropy in Ireland. Since the children of the great Catholic majority were deprived, under the Penal Laws, of education by members of their own religion, these schools, of which there were several in Dublin and its neighbourhood, were established in 1733. Free lodging and clothing were provided for the miserable children of poor Catholics. They were instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic, were brought up as Protestants, and were taught a trade. In *An Address to Persons of Quality and Estate*, published on behalf of the various philanthropic institutions of Dublin in that city in 1752, the Charter Schools are described as

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'a Charity that will make those who are at present a Nuisance and Burden to their Country, to become a Treasure and a Blessing to it; that will make honest and industrious Men of those who would have been bred up in Thievery and Rags; . . . that will multiply obedient and peaceable Subjects to the King, and render the *Protestants of Ireland* safe in their Lives and Possessions.'

The Charter Schools may have been regarded with satisfaction by their patrons, but they were far from being popular with those whom they were supposed to benefit. Indeed, they were never fully occupied except in times of famine or acute distress. The Catholics did not want to be separated from their children, still less to be converted to loyalty and subjection. Perhaps they would have looked more kindly upon these repositories for their offspring had they at least been healthy and comfortable, but the children, besides being roughly and badly taught, were notably sickly, half naked, and half starved. Howard wrote when he was in Ireland in 1788:

'The state of most of the schools which I visited was so deplorable as to disgrace Protestantism and encourage Popery in Ireland rather than the contrary. May I be allowed to hint [he adds] that there should be one plain decent uniform for all the children—distinct schools for each sex—clean linen twice a week—a convenient bath—a larger allowance to the masters for diet, and for washing, fire, and candles—a crib-bedstead for *each* child—rooms appropriated to the sick, and an apothecary for each house—distinct schoolrooms, work-rooms and dining-rooms, and an area enclosed for play . . . that premiums and every encouragement should be given to the most *cleanly* and *diligent* children—and the houses lime-whitened once a year.'¹

Since the schools had now become a national concern in that they were handsomely supported by grants from the

¹ In 1769 there were fifty-two Charter schools in Ireland with 2,100 children. In 1791 thirty-eight schools with 1,796 children. A valuable book on *The Charity School Movement* by Miss M. G. Jones (which includes an account of the Irish schools), was published by the Cambridge University Press in 1938.

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Irish Parliament, such criticism could not be overlooked. A Parliamentary Committee was appointed to reform abuses, and an inquiry was held—but the schools were not abolished until 1825, nor was non-sectarian education provided for the people until 1834.

Towards the end of the Georgian period there were a great many schools of varying kinds and quality in Dublin, from the King's Hospital (known as the Blue-coat School) for the sons of 'decayed citizens' to the model school for the training of boys as schoolmasters, which was established by the Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland in Kildare Street shortly after the Union.¹ But according to Warburton, writing in 1818, although £57,000 was each year expended upon education in Ireland, two children out of three still remained uneducated. 'Much has been done,' he remarks, 'yet much remains undone.'

In Dublin, as in London, hospital accommodation was almost non-existent at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The parent of the numerous hospitals that were established in the Irish capital during the Georgian period was a small surgery opened in Cook Street in 1718. But the first foundation of any considerable size was established by moneys bequeathed for the purpose by an Anglo-Irish doctor named Steevens. The hospital, which was erected on the south side of the river on the westerly outskirts of the city, was opened in 1733. It was built in the severe architectural style of the period, and was on a large scale—erected in two storeys, over which were the attics, round a courtyard surrounded by piazzas. In the middle of the century the hospital was governed by the Lord Primate, the Lord Chancellor, the Provost of Trinity College, and a number of judges and bishops; while several of the beds were supported by annual subscriptions from Lord Mornington, the Dowager Countess of Kildare, and other members of the Irish aristocracy. Wesley reported favourably on this institution in 1749, and in the *Address* on behalf of Dublin charities (already referred to in connexion with the Charter Schools) published three years later it was stated to be, in the 'Opinion of several

¹ This Society, founded in 1811, was known as the Kildare Place Society. In 1884 it became the Church of Ireland Training College.

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Gentlemen who have been abroad', not only 'commodious', but 'kept the cleanest of any Hospital of the Kind in Europe'.

Before the end of the eighteenth century Dublin was as well supplied with hospitals as any other city in the three kingdoms. Mercer's Hospital, which started as an almshouse, was opened in 1734;¹ the Lying-in Hospital, the first maternity hospital to be established in the British Isles, in 1745; the Meath Hospital, originally destined for the use of weavers in the Earl of Meath's Liberty, in 1753; St. Patrick's Hospital for 'lunatics and idiots', supported by a handsome legacy bequeathed by Swift for the purpose, in 1757;² Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, named after a Scottish doctor who had practised in Dublin, in 1788.³

During the Georgian period there were several eminent physicians and surgeons in Dublin,⁴ but none of them is

¹ Mercer's Hospital, founded by Mrs. Mary Mercer, was rebuilt in 1757.

² Between 1781 and 1812 two new wings were added to the main building of St. Patrick's Hospital, which is situated on the north side of Bow Lane near Dr. Steevens' Hospital. The hospital contains portraits and many other interesting Swift relics.

³ See T. G. Moorhead, *A Short History of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital* (1942). Other notable Dublin Hospitals were: Dr. Steevens' Hospital, founded in 1720 as a result of a bequest of a physician of that name and his sister; and the Charitable Infirmary, originally a small house in Cook Street (1718), which moved to larger premises on Inns Quay in 1728 and subsequently when this site was required for the new Law Courts in 1786 to 14 Jervis Street (Lord Charlemont's old house). In 1803 a new house was built on the same site and continued in use till the present Jervis Street Hospital was built in 1886. There was also the Royal Military Infirmary in Phoenix Park, the first stone of which was laid by the Duke of Rutland in 1786; the Lock Hospital first opened in Rainsford Street in 1755 and subsequently moved to Townsend Street; the National Eye Infirmary opened in Mary's Abbey in 1814; and the Coombe founded on the original site of the Meath Hospital in 1826.

⁴ For example, Sir Edward Barry, who in 1745 was appointed Physician General of the Army in Ireland, and became Professor of Physic at Trinity College, and Samuel Clossy, who was Physician to Mercer's Hospital and in 1763 published a book entitled *Observations on Some of the Diseases of the Parts of the Human Body taken chiefly from the Dissection of Morbid Bodies*, which is one of the earliest pathological works in the English language. Barry

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more interesting to the social historian than Bartholomew Mosse. The son of an Irish Protestant clergyman, and descended on his mother's side from Richard Boyle, the great Earl of Cork, he chose medicine as a profession and was apprenticed to a Dublin surgeon. As a young man he travelled extensively on the Continent in order to study surgery and midwifery, but settled finally in Dublin in 1742. Mosse was shocked by the miserable conditions under which expectant mothers lived in the poorer parts of the city. 'Their lodgings', he wrote, 'are generally in cold garrets open to every wind, or in damp cellars subject to floods from excessive rains; themselves destitute of attendance, medicines, and often proper food; by which hundreds perish with their little infants, and the community is at once robbed of the Mother and Child.' In order to relieve these sufferings he determined to open a lying-in hospital in Dublin. In 1745 he fitted up a house in George's Lane for the purpose, and when he found these premises inadequate took a site in Great Britain Street (on the north side of the city) and planned a much larger hospital.

Mosse was not only a high-minded philanthropist, but was endowed with energy and imagination. He engaged the fashionable architect Cassels to design his building. He entered into correspondence with Cipriani, the well-known Italian artist (who had worked with the Adam brothers), concerning the decoration of the Chapel, and laid out the gardens with discernment and care. He also showed considerable business capacity, for the celebrated Round Room (ornamented with Flaxman designs) and the gardens (supplied with orchestra and coffee-room) were planned to be the scenes of *fêtes* and assemblies, the proceeds of which were to

died at Bath in 1776, and Clossy emigrated to America and lectured on anatomy in New York. The Medical School at Trinity College was founded in 1711. The Royal College of Surgeons was incorporated in 1784. The College of Physicians, which received its first charter in the reign of Charles II, was established as a School of Physic by Act of Parliament in 1785. All these foundations stimulated the growth of scientific medicine in Dublin. According to Warburton (Vol. II, p. 760), by 1818 there were 96 physicians, 57 surgeons, 42 accoucheurs, 8 dentists, 1 oculist, and 76 apothecaries in the Irish capital.

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go towards the expenses of the hospital. Mosse, who had many difficulties to contend with, spent nearly all his own fortune on what was to become one of the finest maternity hospitals in Europe. He managed later to secure a handsome grant for his enterprise from the Irish Parliament, and also organized a series of lotteries.

On 8th December 1757, the Lying-in Hospital, the first stone of which had been laid in 1751, was at last finished, and was formally opened by the Lord-Lieutenant, the Duke of Bedford, in the presence of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen and many of the nobility and gentry. For a long time the rate of mortality at the hospital, among both mothers and children, was very high,¹ but after the Union, as medical science advanced and sanitary conditions were improved, the death-rate gradually fell.

Dublin hospitals in the eighteenth century, like those of London, seem to have been fairly comfortable, but the buildings were often defective, and they were nearly always overcrowded. The reform of the hospitals was taken seriously in hand at the beginning of the next century. In 1806 an Act of the Imperial Parliament required them to make annual returns of their funds and expenditure, and the Lord-Lieutenant was empowered to hold an inquiry into their general position. In 1779 Howard had reported of Dr. Steevens' Hospital that the 'wards are close and offensive, [while] the windows were shut when the days were fine'. But by the turn of the century the Board of this institution had made many improvements—the windows were kept open, new bedding had been provided, and the wards and passages had been whitewashed.

In England the social danger resulting from the filthy conditions of the new factory population was just beginning to be recognized. Dr. Percival, of Manchester, who had been led to investigate conditions there owing to a severe outbreak of fever among the cotton operatives in 1784, had admonished 'the better ranks to consult their own safety by remedy-

¹ Between 1757 and 1786, 22,812 children were born in the Rotunda Hospital, of which 1,131 were still-born and 3,219 died before they left the hospital—i.e. roughly one in six of those born alive. This high rate of mortality has been attributed to bad drainage and ventilation, and overcrowding.

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ing the disorders of the Poor', and as the result of his report a Board of Health had been established in his city and better sanitary conditions provided for the workers.¹ The Dublin medical authorities were impressed by the Manchester reforms; and the crying need for cleanliness and sanitary improvements was brought home to them by the great typhus epidemics which were flooding the general hospitals in Dublin with fever patients. After 1817 the number of fever hospitals was increased, and a variety of efficient measures taken to fight the epidemic all over the country.

Between 1801 and 1838, when the English Poor Law was introduced into Ireland, more than 114 Commissions appointed by the Crown, and sixty-one Parliamentary Committees were established to examine the state of the poor, and reforms such as the segregation of the insane in separate lunatic asylums were carried out.² By the end of the Georgian period the whole sanitary condition of Dublin had greatly improved. The city was better paved and drained; new sewers had been laid down; an adequate supply of water was provided; the old oil-lamps had been done away with, and the city was lit by gas.

As one turns over the pages of the Dublin directories of the late eighteenth century or any of the numerous guide-books that began to make their appearance after the Union one is struck by the enormous number of charities that were supported in the city. 'Few capitals in Europe', wrote Warburton, 'have in proportion to their population more charitable foundations than Dublin has at present.' Besides dispensaries, hospitals, and schools there were two Asylums for the Blind, several Penitentiaries for Criminals of both Sexes, a Female Orphan House, the Magdalen Asylum for 'unfortunate females abandoned by their seducers', innumer-

¹ See E. Percival, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Percival*, M.D., 4 vols. (1807).

² Before 1810 lunatics were placed in the hospital of the House of Industry, or in the prisons. In 1810 a grant was made by the Imperial Parliament for the establishment of the Richmond Lunatic Asylum; other asylums were soon founded. See T. P. C. Kirkpatrick, *A Note on the History of the Care of the Insane in Ireland up to the End of the Nineteenth Century*. Dublin University Press (1931).

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able religious associations such as the Association for Discourteuing Vice, the Mendicity Institution formed to deal with the increase of pauperism which made its appearance after the French wars,¹ and countless other societies. Most of these charities were supported by voluntary contributions, but large sums of money were given by generous individuals such as Lady Arabella Denny,² foundress of the Magdalen Asylum, and Thomas Pleasants,³ who distributed sums for the benefit of the Dublin poor out of his own fortune amounting to a hundred thousand pounds. Generous grants were made by the Irish Parliament, and considerable sums were raised by charity sermons.

From the first quarter of the eighteenth century until the time when the problem of poverty was taken seriously in hand by the State the charity sermon was the great prop of the philanthropist. Towards the end of the century it was

¹ The number of beggars in Dublin greatly increased after the Napoleonic wars, owing to the disbandment of soldiers and sailors, and an epidemic which reduced many to penury. A committee of gentlemen was formed to consider the problem in 1817 which founded the 'Association for the Suppression of Mendicity' in 1818. This society gave relief in food and did its best to provide employment.

² Lady Arabella Denny (1707-92) was a daughter of Thomas Fitzmaurice, first Earl of Kerry, her mother being Anne, only daughter of Sir William Petty. Left a widow in 1742, she devoted herself to works of benevolence and charity in Dublin and its neighbourhood. She looked after many institutions, including the Foundling Hospital, but the Magdalen Asylum in Leeson Street (opened in 1767) was her special care. Her name is frequently mentioned in the *Life of Lady Huntingdon* and in Mrs. Delany's *Correspondence*. See the *Kerry Archaeological Magazine* for 1912-14, vol. ii, pp. 98-9.

³ Thomas Pleasants (1728-1818) was a native of Co. Carlow whose affluent circumstances enabled him to gratify a philanthropic disposition and make large contributions in support of Dublin charities and institutions. He founded a school and home for girls later known as Pleasants' Female Orphanage. He gave money to the Meath Hospital for an operating theatre, surgical operations being hitherto performed in open wards, and he erected a drying-shed for the poor weavers of the Coombe district in Dublin (the Stove Tenter House) at a cost of £14,000. It was Pleasants who defrayed the cost of reprinting at Dublin in 1816 Madden's *Reflections and Resolutions Proper for the Gentlemen of Ireland* (1738). See articles by Miss B. B. Butler, on 'Thomas Pleasants (1729-1818)' in the *Dublin Historical Record*, Vols. Vi and Vii.

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said that no less than £16,000 was raised annually for charity from this source alone. Every charity had its stated time of the year in which it appealed to the public. The service was well advertised, and a popular preacher chosen—one who could be relied upon to work on the feelings of the congregation and persuade them to open their purse-strings. A witness before the Commission appointed in 1830 to examine 'the State of the Poor' remarked that this mode of appealing to the benevolent was 'more prevalent in Dublin than in London', there being scarcely a Sunday in the spring, autumn, or winter months in which he had not been asked to attend at some place of worship as a collector. Wakefield wrote:

'When a charity sermon is preached, the collection is not made until the feelings of the congregation have been roused by the pathos and eloquence of the minister. A number of ladies, distinguished by their personal attractions, rank in life, or prominent character, are appointed collectors. They are attended by gentlemen bearing wands, and each lady, taking her own portion of the Church, goes round the pews, handing a silver dish to every individual, while the squire stands behind with another silver dish, into which the money is emptied. This method is preferable to that adopted in England, where the churchwardens stand at the door with plates. On man, the fascinating influence of beauty, pleading with a look of compassion for the unfortunate, must have a powerful effect; and those insensible to female charms may be induced to be liberal, from an apprehension of the satire of a dashing belle.'

Occasionally orchestral concerts were given in the churches in order to draw larger congregations. We read in *Pue's Occurrences* of 10th April 1736:

'On Thursday last was preached a charity sermon at St. Andrew's [Church] by the Reverend Dean Madden for the benefit of Mercer's Hospital; at the same time was performed a grand Te Deum, Jubilate, and an anthem composed by the famous Mr. Handel. Mr. Dubourg played the first violin, Signor Pasqualini the first bass. . . . The performers were

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upwards of seventy in number, among whom were several noblemen and gentlemen of distinction. . . . There were present their Graces the Duke and Duchess [of Dorset] . . . attended by a vast number of the nobility and gentry of the first rank.'

The greatest of Irish preachers was the Rev. Walter Blake Kirwan, a native of Galway, who became Dean of Killala in 1800. Kirwan was educated as a Jesuit, and was for a time Professor of Natural and Moral Philosophy at Louvain, but he turned Protestant in 1787 and became rector of two Dublin churches—first of St. Peter's, then of St. Nicholas Without. We learn from a memoir published after his death that:

'Whenever he preached, such multitudes assembled that it was necessary to defend the entrance of the church by guards and palisadoes. He was presented with addresses and pieces of plate from every parish, and the freedom of various corporations; his portrait was painted and engraved by the most eminent artists, and (what was infinitely more grateful to his feelings) the collections at his sermons far exceeded any that were ever known in a country distinguished for unmeasured benevolence. . . . He would get £1,000 or £1,200 at a sermon, and his hearers, not content with emptying their purses into the plate, sometimes threw in jewels or watches, as earnest of further benefactions.'

Kirwan spoke to his listeners of multitudes being suffered to perish from 'the absolute want of aliment', of poverty stalking around us 'ravenous and despairing', of 'mothers almost devouring their young', of orphans 'disputing offals with the brutes'. 'One single morning devoted to explore the recesses of misery in this metropolis,' he told his hearers, 'would preach to you through life; would stamp you merciful for ever.' 'Be merciful,' he cried; 'oh, be merciful according to the measure of the occasion. Act at this instant as you would act were you certain that this very night your soul would be demanded of you.' Sometimes an even more dramatic note was struck. 'If they who lie there,' he ex-

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claimed on one occasion, pointing from the pulpit to the churchyard, 'whose places you now occupy and whose riches you possess (God only knows *how* possess); if they, I say, were at this moment to appear amongst you (don't tremble), it would not be to reclaim their wealth, but to bear testimony to *its vanity*.' There were a few, even in this age of romanticism, who were scornful of these flights of oratory,¹ but most of Kirwan's hearers were charmed, and even genuinely uplifted. 'I doubt much', wrote one of them, 'if St. Paul could have preached better.' And Barrington declared in his *Personal Sketches* that Kirwan pronounced 'the most impressive orations' that he had ever heard.

Roman Catholics naturally formed the great majority of the poor of Dublin, but the exact proportion between Catholics and Protestants, in view of the lack of statistics, is difficult to estimate. In the early part of the eighteenth century Primate Boulter gave it as his opinion that the ratio was five to one, while Wakefield, writing in 1812, declared that it was six to one. 'It is generally thought,' wrote Luckombe, an Englishman who toured through Ireland in 1779, 'that there are two Papists for one Protestant; most of the poorer sort and nearly all the servants being of the first class; and among the Papists chiefly it is that many families are crowded into one house.'

The well-meant and sometimes mistaken charity of the Protestant upper classes has been spoken of, but the poorer people were not entirely deprived of the aid of members of their own religion. When the Penal Laws were in full swing Catholic worship was carried on secretly, but as they were relaxed the old chapels in Dublin were reopened, and new ones were built. Among those parish priests who worked devotedly among the poor were Father John Austin and the

¹ Dr. William Drennan, a Dublin doctor already mentioned in the text (p. 41), remarks in a letter, 21st May 1791. 'His voice is good, but not delightful, nor do its tones touch the heart.' And De La Tocnaye, the young French emigré who was in Dublin in 1797, while praising Kirwan's oratory, declares that he had set a bad fashion of preaching in Dublin. He observes, 'The pulpit is often occupied by enthusiasts who are often so extravagantly ridiculous that you would imagine the Devil himself was come to give us a spice of his oratory.'

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Rev. Dr. Thomas Betagh. Father Austin,¹ a very popular preacher, opened a famous school in Saul's Court, off Fishamble Street, in 1760, and here he was joined by Betagh and other Jesuits. Father Betagh, who established an evening free school on his own account, collected and distributed food in times of unemployment, and engaged in other good works, was so beloved by the people that when he died in 1811 he was given a public funeral. On the day of his burial his fellow-citizens gave expression to their feelings by shutting up their shops.²

It must not be thought that the Dublin poor in the age of the Georges were without diversion or amusement. They got an enormous amount of pleasure from bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and attendance at public executions.³ In the evenings they would promenade round the City Basin⁴ (off James's Street), from which the town was supplied with water, or resort to taverns, where they played billiards or

¹ For Father John Austin (1717-84), who entered the Society of Jesus in Champagne 1735, and was Prefect of the Irish College at Poitiers, see an article by A. O'Rahilly in *The Irish Monthly*, vol. lxvii, pp. 181-96.

² Thomas Betagh, S. J. (1739-1811), of whom there is a portrait in the *Hibernian Magazine* for February 1811, was born at Kells, Co Meath, and was educated in France. He was the parish priest of the Church of St. Michael and St. John, and was as renowned for his preaching as for his good works.

³ Criminals of Dublin City were executed 'at Stephen's Green.' This was actually at a point between Upper Fitzwilliam Street and Lad Lane, by the side of the road to Baggot Rath. For criminals of Dublin County the gallows were at Kilmainham. People were hanged, as in England, for stealing, robbing, and coining, and, as in England, were often heroes in the eyes of the mob. For 'De Night before Larry was Stretch'd,' 'The Kilmainham Minuet', and other typical ballads relating to executions, see *The Dublin Historical Record* for September 1938, pp. 75-93. An interesting collection of Irish Street Ballads, adorned with woodcuts from the original broadsheets, was annotated by Colm O'Lochlainn and published at 'The Sign of the Three Candles', Dublin, in 1939.

⁴ About 1308 a watercourse was constructed from the Dodder at Templeogue to Dublin, but the supply was so uncertain when drought reduced the volume of the Dodder that early in the eighteenth century the Corporation built a reservoir to store the water in time of plenty. This stretch of water, bounded by walks, and adorned with trees, became a popular resort where bands and displays of fireworks were frequently provided.

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cards, sometimes descending into the cellars to fire at marks by candlelight. Occasionally strangers exhibited camels and other unfamiliar animals for their benefit. At other times a balloon ascent¹ or a military review was the popular attraction. Nor were even the most miserable devoid of Irish gaiety and wit. Sir John Gilbert and others tell stories of famous beggars, shoeblacks,² and other humble characters whose piquant remarks were relished in Castle circles and perhaps travelled as far as London drawing-rooms.³ There were few visitors from across the Channel on the look-out for witty sayings and bulls who could not find something to record in their journals.

The great popular carnival of the period was Donnybrook Fair, which was held for a week every August, as Barrington describes it, on a green flat about a mile from Dublin city on the banks of a shallow stream. Tents were erected upon the grass, formed of sods and wattles covered with quilts, old winnowing sheets, petticoats, or whatever else could be got. In these, benches were stretched along the sides, and doors down the centre to act as tables. In the best tents 'neat victuals' were provided—lumps of salt beef and cabbage, potatoes and Dublin Bay herrings—which were cooked on

¹ See note 2, p. 115, on ballooning in Ireland.

² There are some interesting details relating to Dublin shoeblacks, a numerous and formidable body, in J. E. Walsh's *Ireland Ninety Years Ago* (1876), p. 66. 'The polish they used,' he writes, was 'lampblack and eggs, of which they purchased in the markets all that were rotten. Their implements consisted of a three-legged stool, a basket containing a blunt knife called a spudd, a painter's brush, and an old wig.' The shoes were scraped with the spudd, and wiped with the wig. The polish dried of itself, and needed no friction. It had a horrid smell, which sometimes tainted even the air of fashionable drawing-rooms. Maria Edgeworth in her *Essay on Irish Bulls* (1802) gives some examples of shoeblack witticisms.

³ 'At the door of the Globe [Tavern] was the stand of "Blind Peter", a shoe-black, famed in Dublin for his wit, anxious to hear a specimen of which, Lord Townshend, while Viceroy, stopped one day in Essex-street, and, after having had his boots polished by Peter, asked the latter for change of half a guinea—"Half a guinea! your honour," exclaimed the shoe-black, "change for half a guinea from me! By G—! sir, you may as well ask a Highlander for a knee-buckle!"'—Sir J. T. Gilbert, *A History of the City of Dublin* (1859), vol. ii, p. 164.

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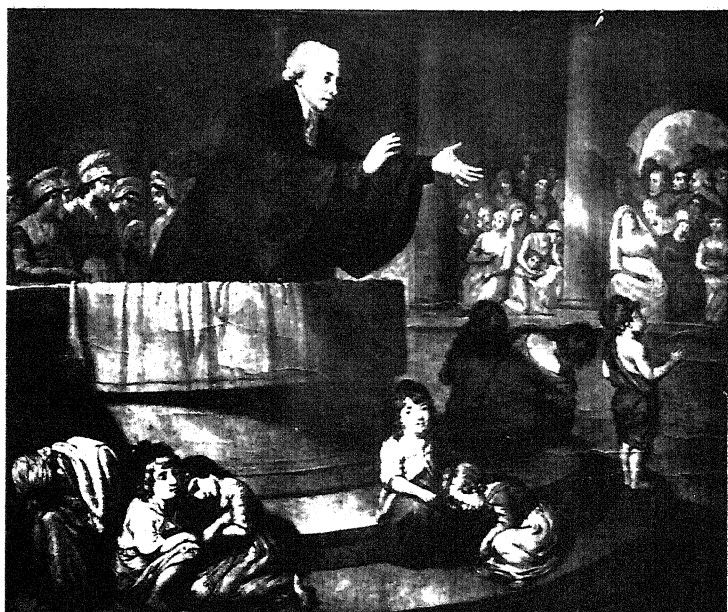
turf fires built up near the doors. For the quality who came to see the 'curiosities' a cold round or rump of beef was provided at 'double price'. Cattle and horses were sold at the Fair, but no one would buy the latter till the owners had shown off their parts. Thus there was plenty of jumping and rough riding, with frequent tumblings—all considered part of the fun. In the evenings dancing began to the music of pipes and fiddles, and every one, drunk or sober, took part. The noise of trumpets, drums, fiddles, whistles, and popguns (which fond mothers had bestowed upon their children in the course of the day) formed a suitable accompaniment to the fighting that ended the festivities. But this, as Barrington points out, was not savage or malicious, being mostly with the shillelagh. 'No one was disfigured thereby or rendered fit for a doctor,' he tells us; 'small hurts were frequent, but did not interfere with the song, the dance, the frolicking or general good humour.'

Barrington and other Irish writers prided themselves on the fact that there were fewer thieves, swindlers, or pick-pockets at this typically Irish festival than at St. Bartholomew's Fair in London. This is probably true, for at Donnybrook little actual money changed hands. The German prince Pückler-Muskau, who was in Dublin in the summer of 1828, paid a visit to the Fair, to which he refers in a letter dated August 29th as follows:

'Nothing indeed can be more national. The poverty, the dirt, and the wild tumult were as great as the glee and merriment with which the cheapest pleasures were enjoyed, . . . not the slightest trace of English brutality was to be perceived: they were more like French people, though their gaiety was mingled with more humour and more genuine good nature; both of which are national traits of the Irish, and are always doubled by "potheen".'

Dancing, riding, jumping, drinking, and love-making

The picture representing Dean Kirwan preaching, formerly hung in the Female Orphan House; it is now in the possession of the Kirwan family. The church is an imaginary one.



DEAN KIRWAN PREACHING ON BEHALF OF THE
FEMALE ORPHAN HOUSE, DUBLIN IN 1800
From an engraving of a painting by Hugh Hamilton



DONNYBROOK FAIR

From a print published in Dublin in 1830

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(Barrington was told by a priest that more marriages were celebrated in Dublin the week after the Fair than in any two months during the rest of the year) were all very well, but in the end there was too much noise and disturbance, and Donnybrook Fair, which had been in existence since the time of King John, was formally declared a 'public nuisance' and abolished in 1855.

No picture of the Dublin poor in the Georgian period would be complete without some mention of the demoralization produced by the lotteries. Money was frequently raised by this method in Ireland from the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The Government supervised the drawing and guaranteed the prizes, but allowed speculators to buy up the tickets and sell them as they pleased. The actual price of a ticket was usually about five pounds, but by the system known as 'insurance' one could wager with an office-keeper that a particular ticket would be drawn. This at least provided a chance of securing a ticket, if not of actually winning one of the larger prizes. As these bets were often as low as a shilling all, including the very poorest, were able to take part in the lottery.

It had been noticed by English writers in the reign of Elizabeth that the 'lower Irish' had a perfect passion for gambling, and certainly in the late eighteenth century they abandoned themselves to the lottery system with almost frantic eagerness. George Cooper in his *Letters on the Irish Nation*, written during a visit to Ireland in 1799, wrote:

'The public streets of Dublin are filled with lottery offices beyond the conception even of a Londoner. These shops are adorned with everything which can catch the eye, and delude the mind of the unwary. They are furnished with the most gaudy trappings, are generally papered with green and gold, and lighted up with a profusion of the most expensive cut-glass chandeliers and girandoles which throw the streets at night into a blaze, and glitter with a brilliancy which cannot fail of surprising a stranger. In these shops are crowds of the most miserable ragged objects (of which Dublin perhaps contains more than any other city in Europe) staking their daily bread on the chance of gain. I have often observed in

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London the multitudes of poor people who are cajoled by the harpies who keep lottery offices. I have often heard of the families of industrious mechanics and manufacturers driven by their frauds into the streets to beg their bread, . . . but yet these are all trifles when compared with the extent to which the evil of lottery offices is carried on in Ireland.'

The hall where the actual drawing was done, to which the public was admitted, was in Capel Street. Two large wheels were set on a slope from each of which at every turn a rolled-up packet was taken—the first containing a number, the second a blank or a prize. A clerk read out the number aloud, while another, on the other side of the wheel, announced its fate. All day long the people who had lounged for weeks around the lottery offices crowded to this hall, many of them having sold or pawned all their possessions in order to try their luck.

In 1791 a report was made to the Dublin Corporation on the evils attendant on the insurance of lottery tickets.¹ We learn:

'It hath induced many servants to pilfer and steal in order to pursue a chance that seems to elude and defy all pursuit. It makes the needy yet more indigent in their circumstances, the honest and industrious corrupt and idle, for, during the drawing of the lottery, their minds are too much interested and agitated to attend to their respective employments, whereby the public must be (for the time) deprived of the advantages that would otherwise arise from an honest industry.'²

During the French Revolution, in order to check the growth of that 'infidelity and immorality' which was supposed to have spread from France, an Association for Discourtenancing Vice and Promoting the Knowledge and

¹ The insurance of lottery tickets was made an illegal practice in 1793.

² Mr. Richard Twiss, informs us in his *Tour of Ireland* published in 1776: 'There are annually several lotteries in Ireland many of the tickets of which are sent to England to be sold in open defiance of Acts of Parliament.'

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Practice of the Christian Religion was formed in Dublin supported by private subscription and Parliamentary grants for the suppression of licentious books, consumption of spirituous liquors, betting, and gambling; and a number of pious tracts were put on sale which it was hoped the poorer classes would read so that their morals might be elevated. One of these, entitled *The Wonderful Advantages of Adventuring in a Lottery! !*, attempted to prove that 'love of money was the root of all evil' by setting forth a melancholy tale. John Doyle, the servant of a respectable merchant, was tempted to take part in a lottery by receiving a handbill one day from a man standing at the door of a receiving-office. Over a period of weeks, he bought several tickets on which he expended his savings, and spent so much time in watching the drawings from the Wheel of Fortune that he gradually abandoned his work and neglected his family. Having finally lost all his money and pawned his master's silver as well, he became miserably dejected, and began to spend his time in public houses. At last he threw in his lot with a highwayman and shot a gentleman on the road. He was, of course, arrested and sent to Newgate, and deprived of his life with a rope. This tract, which is worthy of Hannah More, was published in Dublin in 1810. It was sold by a bookseller in Capel Street,¹ who was printer to the Cheap Repository for Religious and Moral Tracts, and it cost the sum of one penny.

The deplorable state of the poorer classes in Ireland in the eighteenth century was largely due to the rapid and immense increase of the population. 'According to the late enumeration of 1821,' wrote Malthus in his *Essay on Population*, 'the population of Ireland amounted to 6,801,827, and in 1695 it was estimated only at 1,034,000. If these numbers be correct, it affords an example of continued increase for 125 years together at such a rate as to double the population in about forty-five years—a more rapid increase than has

¹ This was William Watson of Capel Street, Dublin. Here are the titles of some other moral and pious tracts printed by him: *The Market Woman: or Honesty is the Best Policy*; *The History of Mary Wood, the Housemaid*; *Path to Riches and Happiness*; *The Apprentice's Monitor*; *The Good Mother's Legacy*; *The Gamester: the Story of Sinful Sally*.

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probably taken place in any other country of Europe during the same length of time.¹

This great increase of the Irish population has been attributed to the encouragement of tillage by the Government, which led to a minute subdivision of farms, and to a reckless improvidence caused by the low standard of living. Whatever the cause it certainly intensified the problem of poverty in Dublin, for, although the death-rate was always very high, and there was a good deal of migration to England, besides recruitment for the Army and Navy, the city population was constantly being renewed by an inflow of peasants from the country.

¹ The estimate of the Irish population made by Petty in 1672 was 1,320,000. In 1788 J. P. Bushe estimated it at 4,040,000. According to a return made to Parliament by the Hearth Money Collectors in 1791, it was then 4,206,612. In 1805 Newenham reckoned it at 5,395,456. In 1812, according to an incomplete census, it was 5,937,356; and according to the census of 1831 it was 7,767,401.

CHAPTER V

Intellectual and Artistic Life

It is not the being a Native of this, or that Country, that giveth real Merit, Judgment or Taste; but a brain well adapted to Calculation, and nice Proportions.

An Essay on the Antient and Modern State of Ireland
(Dublin, 1759)

It would be a grave error to suppose that everything in Ireland was frivolous and corrupt, [and] that there was no genuine intellectual life, no real public spirit moving in the country.

W. E. H. LECKY, *A History of Ireland*
in the Eighteenth Century (1892)

Learning and letters cannot have been much in evidence in Dublin before the foundation of Queen Elizabeth's University in 1591. These are the fruits of peace and political stability, and up to the end of the sixteenth century the attention and energies of the Anglo-Irish were absorbed by war. Despite the encouragement given by the Government, the number of Cambridge men connected with Trinity College in its early days, and the glory cast upon it by the scholarship of Ussher and other Irishmen, it was forced to struggle hard for its existence during the century following its foundation. Some of its estates in the North were seized by the rebels in 1641, which meant a stoppage of rents, and during the Jacobite Wars things came to such a pass that the Provost and Fellows fled across the Channel. When King James was in Dublin the buildings were turned into a barracks, and part of the College became a prison for Protestants. The University, however, immediately benefited from the peace, and we find it celebrating its centenary in 1691 with pomp and Latin orations.

The University of Dublin naturally reflected the spirit of the times, and though William had won the Boyne, some of

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its members were strongly Jacobite. One of the students had the audacity when admitted to his M.A. degree to make a speech in which he questioned the right of Queen Anne to her throne. Healths were openly drunk to the Pretender. The truncheon was stolen from the hand of King William on College Green, and his face was daubed with mud. The College authorities, frightened no doubt of being suspected of disloyalty, and naturally attached to the house of Hanover, took a high hand. Obstreperous students were admonished or expelled, and loyal addresses were presented to the Crown.

In 1717 Richard Baldwin was elected Provost, and ruled over the College for forty-one years. He fortunately owned a strong personality and was a believer in discipline—just the man who was needed to control the laxity and restlessness that had grown out of troubled times. From a contemporary pamphlet we learn how at the beginning of his *régime* the Fellows were seldom seen at prayers, the Dean absented himself from dinner in Hall, and lecturers received salaries but failed to deliver lectures. The students, however, were the worst offenders. It seems to have been the custom, for instance, to ‘violently shake’ the commons intended for the Fellows out of the hands of the sizars who were waiting upon them at table, and tutors and Fellows were frequently rudely jostled and hissed. The Provost himself was not treated with much respect. Primate Boulter describes in a letter written in 1724 how on one occasion some students who had been entertaining friends in College at night after the gates were locked proceeded to his house to ask that they might be opened. When informed by the servant that the Provost had gone to bed, taking the keys with him, they began knocking on the door—and with such violence that the great man came down himself to see what was the matter. It is pleasing to learn that he did not consent to deliver the keys as the result of this racket, and that the next day the students who refused submission were promptly expelled.

The most sensational event in student history in the early part of the century was the murder of one of the Fellows in 1734. The Junior Dean, Edward Ford, having made himself very unpopular with the undergraduates, received warning

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that the windows of his rooms would be broken. The students, duly arriving one evening, commenced to throw stones, whereupon Ford, who had deliberately laid in a stock of ammunition, began to fire down upon them. The infuriated young men ran away, but returned with a gun, and the Junior Dean was wounded and died. Public opinion in Dublin sympathized with the students and condemned Ford. The punishment awarded therefore was light, especially as some of the offenders belonged to families of consequence.

Baldwin did his best to keep order and discipline. He insisted on prompt payment of fees. All had to attend Chapel. No swords might be worn, and duels were strictly prohibited. Philip Skelton,¹ the Irish author and divine, was a student at Trinity between 1724 and 1728. Although he underwent a disagreeable interview with Baldwin, who was a strong Whig and suspected the youth of Jacobitism, he had a great admiration for his Provost. He tells us that he had a 'kind of solemn gravity suitable to his station', and that he was 'very dignified and striking'. That he was also very courageous he relates the following story to prove. In Dublin, as at Oxford and Cambridge, there were frequent conflicts between Town and Gown. The special enemies of the Dublin students were the butchers of the Ormond Market, in whose conflicts with the Coombe weavers the 'Trinity boys' took part. When the latter attended the service at St. Patrick's, as they were obliged to do by the statutes every Sunday during Lent, they were often attacked by the butchers, and horrid battles took place. On one of these occasions the Provost ran out before the undergraduates, crying, 'Follow me, my lads, and I'll head you. I am appointed by your parents and friends to take care of you, and I'll fight for you till I die!' 'He would have done so, too,' says Skelton, 'for he was as brave as a lion.'

Baldwin not only kept the students in awe, but allowed no insubordination among the Fellows. One of these, Dr. Patrick Delany, later promoted to an Irish Deanery, was a

¹ Burdy's *Life of Skelton*, published in 1792 and reprinted with an introduction by Norman Moore in 1914, is a work of intrinsic interest as well as of great value to the student of social life in Ireland under the Georges.

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man of peculiar distinction.¹ He was the friend of Swift, author of several books, and an excellent preacher. He did not hold Baldwin's political views, however, and on one occasion defended in a College sermon the cause of some students who had been expelled by the Provost. Baldwin, infuriated by this threat to his authority, declared he would expel the Fellow unless he gave him a formal apology, and Delany, although supported by the powerful Carteret, then Viceroy, was forced to submit and confess his error publicly in Hall. Perhaps Baldwin was too much of a tyrant, but he was an excellent Provost. Of his affection for the College there is no doubt, for he left it a handsome legacy.

After Baldwin as Provost came Francis Andrews in 1758, endowed with less personality but more in touch with the world. He had lived for some time in Rome, where Hardy, Lord Charlemont's biographer, tells us, he charmed the young men of rank who were making the Grand Tour. They delighted in his 'agreeable, useful, and miscellaneous knowledge', and in the wit with which he seasoned it. Andrews was too fond of the pleasures of the table, and his manners were coarse, but he must have been a presentable scholar. In Padua he is said to have astonished the Italian professors by his classical attainments, the purity of his style, and the ease with which he addressed them in Latin.

It was Andrews who built the Provost's House and superintended the decoration of its rich interior. Under him the beautiful West Front of Trinity was completed, and most of Parliament Square was built. He was extremely hospitable, a good speaker in Parliament, where he sat for his native Derry, and very popular with the Irish aristocracy.² It was

¹ Patrick Delany, who was born in Ireland, was the son of a servant in the employment of the Irish judge Sir John Russell. He married Mrs. Pendarves on 9th June 1743, and became Dean of Down by the interest of her relations in May 1744. He subsequently lived between his northern diocese and Delville, his villa near Dublin, and died at Bath on 6th May 1768. He published sermons and a variety of books including *Observations upon Lord Orrery's Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift* (1754).

² Provost Andrews wrote a number of interesting letters to Edmond Sexton Pery, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. See 'Correspondence and

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probably due to his social gifts that the Irish Parliament made such handsome grants for the College buildings, for the money voted by them at this period amounted to thousands of pounds.¹ But the members of the Irish Houses had a more general reason for regarding the University with favour, in that most of them had been educated within its walls. After the Union the nobility and gentry sent their sons to Oxford and Cambridge, but in the eighteenth century they went to 'Dublin College', for in those days careers were open to them at home.² Towards the end of his life Andrews was obliged for reasons of health to leave the College and live abroad. But the University had made good progress under his rule. Not only were the buildings enlarged and beautified, but chairs of Greek and Mathematics had been founded, and the importance of Modern History advanced by the separation of this chair from that of Oratory. Under Andrews too flourished some of those Fellows who have conferred most distinction upon the University. Thomas Leland, for instance, editor of Demosthenes, one of the first classical scholars of the day, who was respectfully spoken of by Dr. Johnson. Another was Hugh Hamilton, later Bishop of Ossory, who was Professor of Natural Philosophy and a Fellow of the Royal Society. Andrews made provision in his will for the endowment of an astronomical observatory in connexion with his College, a fitting tribute to the rising importance of science.

Hely-Hutchinson, who succeeded Andrews in 1774, had the distinction of being the first Provost to bring the College

Papers of Edmond Sexton Pery, 1771-85,' published in the eighth report of the *Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Appendix, Part I (1881), pp. 174-208.

¹ Trinity College received at least £60,000 for building during the course of the eighteenth century.

² From data collected by Provost Hely-Hutchinson in his history of the College (1790-2), the manuscript of which is in the library of Trinity College, it has been estimated that in 1704 there were 472 students; in 1715, 413; in 1731, 525; in 1774, 583; and in 1792, 933. In 1816, 1,090 were on the College books, and in 1817, 1,230; but, of these, until the building was extended, only a small proportion were accommodated within the College walls.

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definitely into touch with politics.¹ He has been much criticized for his political ambitions and activities, but politics after all were the absorbing interest in Ireland in his day, and it is not surprising that one who hoped to occupy, and who did occupy, such an important position in Dublin as Provost of Trinity College should be drawn into the vortex. It must be confessed that he was not very scrupulous, but here again he was no worse than his contemporaries, for Irish politics at the end of the eighteenth century were not a savoury pursuit. Hely-Hutchinson was a native of Cork, and was himself educated at Trinity, where he took his degree in 1744. After that he was called to the Bar, and entered the House of Commons. He soon had a lucrative practice, and in 1761 became a Privy Councillor. He gained the Provostship by an unworthy intrigue with Sir John Blaquiere, who was Chief Secretary of State, and when once Provost tried to turn the representation of the University into a pocket borough for the benefit of his sons. All this made him very unpopular with the Fellows, who regarded politics with academic aversion and felt that, never having been a Fellow himself, he was not very likely either to appreciate their merits or to respect their prejudices. Hutchinson did, as a matter of fact, ride rough-shod over them. He used several harshly, and tried to bribe those who opposed him. He gave further offence by trying to deprive the College of what a contemporary referred to as its 'heavy Gothic character' by introducing some study of the *belles-lettres*. He founded two chairs of Modern Languages,² and catered for fashionable young Irishmen who contemplated setting out on the Grand Tour by making provision for lessons in dancing and fencing. He

¹ Some of Hely-Hutchinson's letters covering the years 1761 to 1794 included in 'The Manuscripts of the Earl of Donoughmore' are published in the twelfth report of the *Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Appendix Part IX (1891).

² A Professorship of Italian and Spanish and another of French and German, were founded at Trinity College in 1777. By 1821 there were at least fourteen professorships—Divinity, Hebrew, Civil and Canon Laws, Physic, Greek, Modern Languages, Mathematics, Oratory, History, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Anatomy and Surgery, Chemistry, and Botany, and two lectureships, those in Divinity and Greek.

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was much criticized by his enemies, who nicknamed him 'the Prancer', and Dublin at one time was flooded with verses written at his expense.¹

The chief of Hely-Hutchinson's opponents was Dr. Patrick Duigenan, a Fellow of the College who had bitterly opposed his election and resigned after his appointment. Duigenan, who afterwards became Judge of the Prerogative Court of Ireland, may have been sincere in his disapproval, but he was a man of violent prejudice—'a hot rough intrepid obstinate mind', according to Barrington—who spent most of his life abusing his neighbours. In a little book, entitled *Lachrymæ Academicæ*, which he published in 1777 he made a violent attack on the Provost. This contains a number of ridiculous charges. He says, for instance, that he was ignorant of the 'commonest classicks' and unfit for his duties, the chief of which apparently was participation in the examination of candidates for Fellowship—'the severest, most solemn, and critical, established at this day on any part of the earth'. He says that Hely-Hutchinson's sole aim in becoming Provost was to enrich himself and his family, and even goes the length of accusing his enemy of stealing the College plate! Duigenan is particularly censorious of the fact that the Provost was, contrary to custom, a married man. It was almost equally shocking in his eyes that he had once held a commission in a cavalry regiment and that he was fond of good society. 'The College walks and gardens,' he writes, 'hitherto sacred to the exercise and contemplation of the sober academick, are now infested by himself and military officers mounted on prancing horses; his wife and adult daughters with their train of female companions; and his infant children; their nurses and go-carts; who by their pomp and clamour have banished the muses and may probably be the authors of greater and more serious evils.'

We may smile at these fears and despise his prejudice, but some of the learned doctor's criticisms were just. Besides being unscrupulous in politics, Hely-Hutchinson was much too high-handed in College affairs. He claimed a right of

¹ See *Pranceriana: A Select Collection of Fugitive Pieces* (Dublin, 1775).

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veto in every election, and deprived scholars and Fellows of office and emoluments at will.

When all has been said of this 'harlequin genius', however, the fact remains that he was a remarkable man. According to Hardy, he was one of the best orators in the Irish Parliament, and immensely improved the tone of the debates. He avoided the 'sterile and interminable rhetoric of the day' and spoke clearly and briefly. He was at the same time witty and agreeable, and could always hold the attention of the House. He was an exceptionally able business-man. By having the College estates revalued, for example, he added greatly to the income of the University. He was also an author of repute. His *Commercial Restraints*—the book in which he advocated Free Trade for his country—was an admirable bit of pleading in which he reflected the wisdom of Adam Smith. He was also more tolerant than many others of his generation, for he advocated Catholic Emancipation and the admission of Roman Catholics to degrees. He was for improving the whole position of Roman Catholics in the University. 'I would have them go into examinations,' he declared in one of his Parliamentary speeches, 'and make no distinction between them and the Protestants but such as merit might claim. . . . The present laws are disgraceful; they prohibit the Roman Catholics from receiving any education at all, and therefore should be abolished—the Roman Catholics should receive the best education in the established university.'

Hely-Hutchinson had fought a duel with a Mr. Doyle who had offered himself as Parliamentary candidate in opposition to his son, and this was one of the scandals most talked of by his enemies. It certainly set a bad example to the students, who, according to Duigenan, were continually practising with pistols in the College Park and even let them off in their rooms. The disorders with which Baldwin had had to contend seem to have revived towards the end of the century. 'Last Wednesday', wrote one of the undergraduates to his father in 1789, 'a gentleman shot a boy in the Library [Liberty?] for throwing snowballs at him,' and in another letter from the same youth we find the remark that Commons on Trinity Sunday had been 'very pleasant'—for geese had

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been thrown, trenchers smashed, and 'everything tore and broke'.¹

The students did not confine their high spirits within the College walls, but often invaded the town. Barrington tells in his *Personal Sketches* how he and others used to break into the theatres, beating the audience or smashing everything within their reach, and of how they drove about the streets on dark nights in coaches destroying the windows of the houses they passed by flinging halfpence against them. Sometimes they threw large crackers into the china and glass shops, delighting to see the terrified shopkeepers trampling on their wares for fear of an explosion. Sometimes they placed gunpowder squibs on the lamps in several streets at once, contriving by fuses to have them all burst at the same time. Whole streets would thus be left in darkness, to the dismay of the populace. Occasionally they borrowed cloaks and rattles from the watchmen and broke into low, prohibited lodging-houses, knocking out the lights and driving the gamblers into the cellars. Then they would pounce upon the stakes and present them as gifts to the watchmen. The sons of the nobility wore gowns adorned with gold or silver trimmings according to their rank, but when they joined these expeditions, in which they often took the lead, they prudently turned them inside out to escape recognition. Often the students carried the great keys of their rooms in the tails or sleeves of their gowns—'devilish good weapons on a dark night in a street wrangle or a gutter fray,' as a contemporary writer describes them.

Sometimes the undergraduates went in a body to the House of Commons, where they had the right of being admitted to the Gallery without a Member's order. This privilege was taken away, however, on account of the shouting and cheering that followed the speech made by Grattan in 1795 when Fitzwilliam was recalled. The Speaker sent the Sergeant-at-Arms with a 'posse of messengers' to clear the Gallery. 'We were pushed out in a heap without the slightest ceremony',

¹ These extracts are from the letters of George Stacpoole to his father in Co. Clare, printed in the eighteenth volume of the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* (1887-8), pp. 400-3.

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we are told by one who was present, 'and were never again suffered to enter as privileged persons.'

Those who gave offence to students either singly or in a body were sure to suffer their vengeance. One dark night in the winter of 1775 a body of students drove in a coach to the house of a printer named Mills who had published matter that they had found distasteful. They called him to his door on pretence of bargaining for books, and bundled him suddenly into their coach, holding pistols to his head until they reached the pump which stood in the front square of the College. Here, after being nearly trampled to death, he was almost suffocated, and would no doubt have died but for the interference of some of the Fellows. The Fellows, however, were not always so obliging. Goldsmith's tutor, the notorious Dr. Wilder, was once passing through the College court when a bailiff was receiving similar punishment. Pretending to intervene for the man, he called out, 'Gentlemen, gentlemen, for the love of God don't be so cruel as to *nail his ears* to the pump.' This indirect command was, of course, immediately carried out. The man was nailed up by one ear and left by his tormentors bleeding and shouting.

Swift, writing in 1726, declared that discipline at 'Dublin College' was stricter than at either Oxford or Cambridge. But Hely-Hutchinson much later remarked:

'This University is exposed to difficulties from which her sister Universities in England are exempt. Her situation in a great metropolis where temptations to pleasure, idleness and vice abound, . . . the frequent recurrence of election contests, the great number of her students, exceeding in a three-fold proportion those of any college in England, . . . the pernicious habit of entering at a very early time of life, the residence of many of the students in the city of Dublin with their parents and friends, render it more difficult to maintain good order in this college, than, perhaps, in any other.'

Towards the close of the century great excitement was produced within the College by the discovery that several of the students and even some of the Fellows had joined the United Irishmen. A solemn Visitation was held (19th April 1798), conducted in the presence of the whole College by the

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Vice-Chancellor—the terrifying Lord Clare. The roll was called, and all were strictly questioned. As a result of the investigation nineteen students were expelled, among whom was Robert Emmet. The College as a whole, however, was loyal to the Crown. During the Rebellion of 1798 a corps of volunteers was formed among the students which was officered by the lay Fellows. The fighting that occurred did not actually affect the University, but the country at large was so disturbed that no quarterly examinations could be held, and all elections to scholarships and fellowships were postponed.

In an essay on the *Antient and Modern State of Ireland* published in Dublin in 1759 a list of the subjects taught at Trinity College is given.

‘The students [we learn] are carefully instructed in the more refined Parts of classical Learning; oriental, ancient and modern Languages; Criticism; sacred and profane History; Oratory; Logick; Ethicks and Metaphysicks; in natural and experimental Philosophy; Anatomy, Botany, and Chymistry; the Mathematicks, in Theory and Practice; Civil and Canon Laws; Theology, Controversy, and Ecclesiastical History; so that, with a good Capacity and regular Application, one may depart this University, as compleatly and happily instituted for the honorary Professions of Life, as may be reasonably expected from any Nursery of Learning extant. . . . The *Newtonian* Philosophy; the excellent *Boyle’s* experimental Philosophy, and Mr. *Locke’s* Metaphysicks prevail much in the College of Dublin: which, for Extent, Convenience, Magnificence, and a most sumptuous elegant Library, exceeds any one College in *Europe*.’¹

² Lectures were given on logic, metaphysics, physics, astronomy, and mathematics, but classics were the chief subject and the usual classical authors were read (see an article on ‘Classical Studies in Trinity College, Dublin,’ by W. B. Stanford in *Hermathena*, vol. lvii, May 1941). Students were expected to take part in ‘declamations’ and ‘disputations’. In a letter from George Stacpoole to his father, written in June 1790, he says: ‘I answer for my last exam in College on next Monday, being the day on which I am to dispute.’ He explains that ‘a number of syllogisms’ were composed by the candidates for the degree of B.A.—i.e. certain principles laid down, the truth of which had to be supported. He also states that students had to write a Greek and Latin theme.

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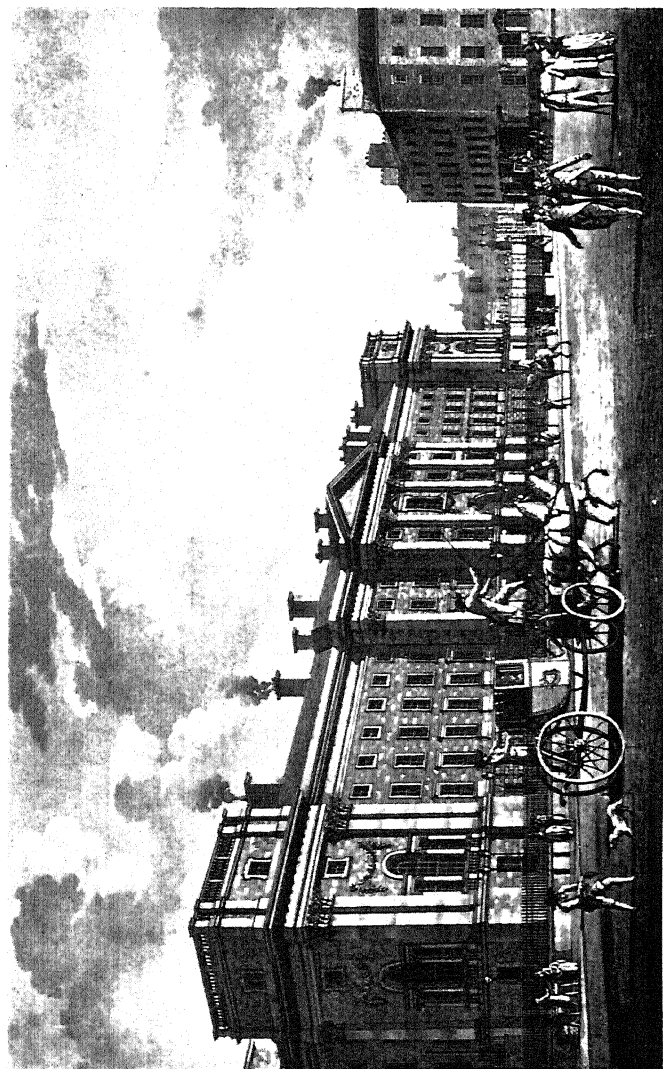
The Library was indeed an ornament to the College. The original nucleus had been formed in 1601, when the English army in Ireland subscribed £700 in honour of their victories for the purchase of books. At the Restoration the collection had received a valuable addition in Archbishop Ussher's collection, which Cardinal Mazarin had tried in vain to secure. Once the new building was completed large additions were speedily made. William Palliser, Archbishop of Cashel, Dr. Claudius Gilbert, Vice-Provost, Dr. John Stearne, Bishop of Clogher, and others all left it valuable bequests.¹ The large gallery on the first storey, 209 feet long and 50 feet broad, lined with volumes and adorned with busts, was a spacious and dignified room that never failed to impress strangers. Malton wrote of it in 1792:

'The bookcases are built and the whole room is cased with fine native oak well-framed and richly carved. . . . The cases for books project from the piers between the windows, about 9 feet into the room, and as there are 19 windows down each side, there are 38 double cases of books 15 feet high containing upwards of 46,000 volumes. Each window place forms a small recess convenient for study, accommodated with desks and seats down the middle. On entering this extensive library [he adds] we are instantly struck with unspeakable reverence and respect for the place, as if feeling the air impregnated with an emanation of religion and learning.'

Barrington, who was a student at Trinity just before Hely-Hutchinson's time, considered the course too pedantic. 'We were set to work', he writes, 'at the most abstruse sciences before we had well digested the simpler ones, and posed ourselves at optics, natural philosophy, ethics, astronomy, mathematics, physics, etc., without the least relief from *belles-lettres*, modern history, geography or poetry.' Of the Fellows he says that they were 'a narrow-minded and untalented body of men getting from £1,000 to £1,500 a year each² for teaching several hundred students how to remain

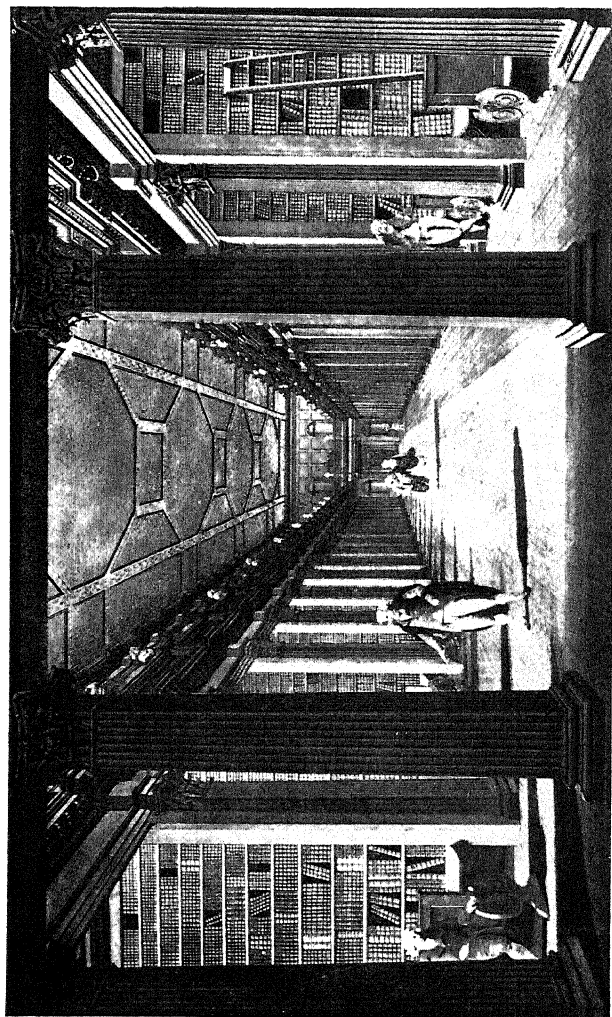
¹ For some account of the treasures of the Library see an article on 'The Library' by the Rev. T. K. Abbott in *The Book of Trinity College*, chapter vii (1892).

² Malton remarks, 'The provision for the Fellows [of Trinity College] is said to be better than for any other university teachers in Europe.'



THE FRONT OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN

From James Malton's *Picturesque and Descriptive View of the City of Dublin* (1792-99)



TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY
(The Long Room)

From James Malton's *Picturesque and Descriptive View of the City of Dublin* (1792-99)

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ignorant of most of those acquirements that a well-educated gentleman ought to be master of'. We may compare these remarks with the accounts of Oxford given by Gibbon and Adam Smith.¹ In their day the old tests and exercises of medieval days were still in vogue. The Fellows spent their time in talking Tory politics or private scandal. The professors, sure of fixed salaries, neglected their lectures. The College tutors did not even trouble to recommend courses of reading to their students. 'The Irish schools and Universities are undisputably better than ours,' wrote Lord Chesterfield in 1751, but he unfortunately adds no details.² The education given at Trinity was undoubtedly pedantic, and not many of the names of the Fellows were heard of outside the College walls. But there were a few, and these were sound scholars whose substantial books were a credit to their university.

Whatever may have been the defects of the educational system 'this University sends out as learned and polite gentlemen as either of the Universities of Great Britain', was the opinion of an Englishman who wrote a description of Dublin in 1732. A long list of eminent Irishmen who graduated at Trinity during the Georgian period might be

¹ See Gibbon's *Autobiography*, and the *Wealth of Nations*, Book V, chapter i. Part 2.

² There were some famous schools in Dublin in the Georgian period—for example, that of Thomas Sheridan in Capel Street, where upon examination days the Lord-Lieutenant and the Archbishop were present, and Greek plays were acted. Swift wrote of Sheridan: 'He was doubtless the best instructor of youth in these kingdoms or perhaps in Europe, and as great a master of the Greek and Roman tongues.' Lord Cloncurry in his *Recollections* (1849) gives an interesting account of a school kept by a Doctor Burrowes at Prospect, Blackrock, Co. Dublin. 'Dr. Burrowes' pupils then [1785-86] numbered from eighty to one hundred all of rank, and of the first families in the country—earls, viscounts, lords, and squires. Among my school-fellows whose names I still remember, were Lords Shannon, Ponsonby, Mountcashel, . . . the last Lord Landaff and his brother the present Bishop of Derry, Lord de Vesci, and the late Knight of Kerry. It was the fashion of that day to educate boys in the community in the midst of which their duties and interests as men required them to live. We were not then sent to learn absenteeism and contempt, too often hatred, for our country, in the schools and colleges of England.' (pp. 6-7).

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given, but the reader will be content to be reminded that this was the university of Goldsmith and Swift, Berkeley and Burke. Although Sir Walter Scott tells us that Swift 'read and studied' at college rather for 'amusement' and to 'divert melancholy reflections' than with the 'zeal of acquiring knowledge', we may feel sure that he did not waste his time. But Goldsmith's career at Trinity was not only a personal misfortune, but reflects little credit on the University. He belonged to the poorest grade of student—the sizars. These performed menial offices such as sweeping the College courts and waiting upon the Fellows. That he bitterly resented this humiliating position we learn from the *Essay on Polite Learning*, in which he also condemns the excessive study of mathematics that he was forced to endure. He was particularly unfortunate in his tutor, the eccentric Dr. Wilder, who bullied his poor pupil unmercifully. A great many stories are told of this learned savage, of which the following is the one where perhaps he comes nearest to amiability. He once met a young lady at one of the street-crossings in Dublin where she could not pass him without walking in the mud. Stopping opposite her, he gazed for a moment on her face, then, laying his hands each side of it, he kissed her. Nodding familiarly at the astonished and offended girl, he said, 'Take that, miss, for being so handsome,' and stepped out of the way to let her pass.

Goldsmith had only himself to blame for much of the miserable time he spent at College. He neglected his lectures and spent a great many hours in lounging at the College gates. He used to write street ballads to help to pay his fees and would steal out at nights to hear them sung. In the summer of 1747 he took part in a students' riot¹ for which the five ringleaders were expelled. His own name was among the 'lesser offenders' who were publicly admonished. A little later he was holding a party contrary to College discipline in his rooms to celebrate a small exhibition he had won. In the

¹ This disturbance, known as 'the Black Dog Riot', took place on 21st May 1747. A student having been arrested for debt, and confined in the Marshalsea Prison, the students attacked the prison, having first seized the bailiff, and soused him under the college pump. They were joined in their attack by the mob, two of whom were killed and several wounded in the subsequent fighting.

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midst of the festivities the terrible Wilder appeared, beat Goldsmith, and knocked him down. The young man was so humiliated by this treatment that he determined to run away, and he actually did so. His brother, however, persuaded him to return to College, and he took his degree in 1749. His name, one observes, stands lowest in the list of graduates who passed on the same day. In the *Essay on Polite Learning* (1759) the poet divides the universities of Europe into three classes, according to the amount of scholastic teaching in vogue and the degree of liberty allowed to the students. Universities such as Edinburgh,¹ where the undergraduates were under few restrictions, whence scholastic jargon had been banished, where one could take a degree when one liked and live at large in the town, were those which he obviously admired. The more stereotyped establishments such as Oxford and Dublin had the disadvantage, he thought, of keeping young men too long from the world—the 'only true school of improvement'.

Burke at College was everything that Goldsmith was not. He worked hard, gained a scholarship, and founded the debating club from which sprang the famous College Historical Society. His youthful letters to his friend Shackleton and his discourses at this club show the range of his reading—a very remarkable one for a young man. They also display his budding powers of criticism and oratory. The minute-book of the club still exists, and is mainly in his handwriting. He must have had a share in framing what is called the 'Preamble to the Laws'. These state the purpose of the club to be the 'improvement' of its members in the 'more refined, elegant and usefull parts of literature'. This was, it is explained, to fit them for the 'great end in view'—'the formation of our minds and manners for the functions of civil society'. The business of the club was 'speeching, reading, writing and arguing in Morality, History, Criticism, Politics and all the useful branches of Philosophy'. The minute-book shows the themes that were debated—'How the Press

¹ Goldsmith had himself studied at the University of Edinburgh, 1752-4. He heard chemical lectures at Paris and is said to have taken the M.B. degree at the University of Louvain.

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should be regulated,' for instance, and 'Whether the linen or woollen manufacture be best for Ireland.' In a debate on 'the Passions' Burke's remarks are abstracted as follows: 'Ye root whence every vice has its nourishment and growth: Wisdom and Virtue, ye children and graces of ye Mind: the Passions enemies to both, and continual rebels to Reason and Decorum.' Burke's club is the oldest college debating society in the United Kingdom of which any account remains. The College Historical Society, its lineal descendant, became a training school for those *alumni* of the University who rose to eminence in later life. Before the close of the eighteenth century it had had such distinguished members as Grattan and Flood, and had merited the description bestowed upon it by Lord Cloncurry in his memoirs—'a nursery of genius and patriotism'.¹ Burke left Dublin in 1750, having been enrolled as a student of the Middle Temple. In a letter describing his journey to a friend he writes, 'My eyes often filled with tears when I reflected on all the dear friends I left behind'. He was sincerely attached to his university, and always held a high opinion of it. 'This body I assure you contains persons of great solidity, great erudition, and very enlarged and capable minds.' This passage occurs in a letter written to the Duke of Portland in 1794 in which he urged that Trinity College should herself be allowed to select her Provost and from among her own members.

Of all the great men connected with Trinity in the eighteenth century Bishop Berkeley sheds the greatest glory upon her. Burke got most of his mental stimulus from England, his 'adopted, dearer and more comprehensive country', but Berkeley, though a citizen of the world rather than of any particular nation, had peculiar connexions with Ireland. He was educated at Dublin University and became a Fellow in 1707. He was subsequently Junior Dean, Senior Greek

¹ In 1794 a dispute with the Board led to the banishment of the College Historical Society from the College. It was again expelled in 1815, owing to the fiery nature of the debates. In 1843 it was again permitted to meet within the College walls. Some interesting details are given in A. P. I. Samuel's *The Early Life and Correspondence of Edmund Burke* (1923).

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Lecturer, Divinity Lecturer, Hebrew Lecturer, and Senior Proctor. He abandoned his academic life in 1713 to go to England and abroad, but in 1721 returned to his College, where he remained for two years. When he came back to Ireland from America he became Bishop of Cloyne, and lived there in seclusion for eighteen years. It was during his early life at Trinity that he published his *Essay towards a New Theory of Vision*, his *Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, and his *Dialogues*—the three books on which his reputation as a philosopher mainly depends. English writers have expressed surprise that Berkeley should have found the stimulus in his Irish surroundings to write these books. The conceptions of Newton and Locke had been quickly digested, however, in Dublin, and the *Principia* and *Essay* promptly placed on the course. Berkeley was not content to remain for ever in a comparatively obscure corner, but he had always been in touch with the stream of eighteenth-century thought.

It was at Cloyne that the Bishop wrote *The Querist*, an essay on Irish problems thrown into the form of questions. In this he represents the point of view of those of the Ascendancy who were wise enough to consider the prosperity of the country as a whole. He asks, 'whether a scheme for the welfare of this nation should not take in the whole inhabitants?' and 'whether it be not a vain attempt to project the flourishing of our Protestant gentry exclusive of the bulk of the natives?' Providing 'plentifully for the Poor' would be to feed 'the root'. The sap would rise up and nourish the branches, causing 'the top to flourish'. To make Ireland prosperous it was necessary, he thought, to develop home industries. Should the export trade suffer no harm would be done. The majority of Irishmen should have 'shoes to their feet', 'clothes to their backs', and 'beef in their bellies', even though squires were condemned to drink ale instead of claret, and fine ladies had to sacrifice silks and laces. Berkeley thought that Ireland could never flourish if England were hostile. He pointed out that amicable relations between the two countries, commercial and otherwise, would not only be wise but profitable. He also suggested that Roman Catholics should be allowed to purchase forfeited land as tending to

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unite their interest with the Government. He strongly advocated their admittance to the University.¹

Hely-Hutchinson wrote of Bishop Berkeley as follows:

‘It was perhaps a pardonable error in such a genius to consider the world as all mind, but as a general scholar, an accomplished gentleman, a delightful and edifying companion, an universal genius improved by every possible mode of culture, a rational patriot, and a philanthropist, loved, respected, and revered by the highest characters of the age in which he lived of all parties and descriptions, this college may justly boast of its Berkeley and challenge any university in Europe to produce his superior.’

The materialistic Provost cannot have had much sympathy with Berkeley, who believed that to destroy matter was to free the soul, but on the question of the admission of the Roman Catholics to the University they were sincerely at one. This was at last made legal by an Act of the Irish Parliament in 1793, but it was not till eighty years afterwards that Catholics could be admitted to Fellowships and scholarships. When Tom Moore, who was the son of a struggling tradesman, entered College in 1794 it was debated in the family circle whether he ought not to be entered as a Protestant, in order that he might compete for the scholarship that was almost a necessity. The temptation was honourably resisted by the Moore family.

Berkeley demands in his *Querist* whether ‘London is not to be considered as the Metropolis of Ireland?’ Certainly those who aspired to literature generally went there to write or to sell their wares. Had Goldsmith and Burke remained in Dublin they would never have written as they did or been what they were; for Ireland was essentially a subordinate nation—and Dublin a provincial town. In a letter to his friend Shackleton written from Dublin in 1747 Burke mentions an ‘ode’ that he had written, and his disappointment in having failed to publish it. He says:

¹ The diocese of Cloyne extended over the eastern and northern parts of County Cork. For a short account of how Bishop Berkeley spent his time here see my *Country and Town in Ireland under the Georges* (1940), pp. 341–3.

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'I had once a thought of printing it, but I have entirely dropt all thoughts of that: for even supposing it good, there are so many discouragements in this town to a man turning author, that 'twould be almost madness to do it. To mention no more, 'tis ten to one (good or bad, the same) whether you shall be read by ten in the city. The people here are the very reverse of the description St. Paul gives of the Athenians, that their whole business is to hear or relate something new. They have no sort of curiosity that way, further than party leads them; and no wonder, for books either in prose or verse seldom enter the conversation of even people of fortune and those who have leisure enough; so that an author's first cries cannot be heard, but he is stifled in his birth. And what can be the cause of this? I'll tell you—the only passions which actuate the people high and low are these two: avarice, and an unbounded love of sensual pleasures.'

Faulkner, the celebrated Dublin printer, had much the same opinion of the Dublin public—they would neither subscribe for books nor buy them. 'You know that Dublin is the poorest place in the world for subscriptions to books,' he wrote to Derrick when he sent him his edition of Swift's works in 1758. 'It is much easier to get a hundred dinners, with as many dozen bottles of claret, than a single guinea for the best author; few or no people here caring to subscribe, and reading not being the prevailing taste.'

In 1745 a satirical pamphlet addressed to the 'Nobility, Gentry, and Clergy of the City of Dublin' by George Faulkner, and Grierson the King's Printer, was published in Dublin. The two printers inform the public that they have not sold any books for some time except some 'few old sermons against Popery, and the newest country dances'. They excuse themselves for presuming to suggest that the reading of good books was not necessarily attended with imminent danger to Throne or Altar, or Christianity in general, or Irish civilization in particular. Should the public not desire 'the useless drudgery of reading', it should be remembered that books were cheaper furniture, and would wear longer than the hangings of a good Genoa damask. One thousand books if provided for by the joiner would,

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together with the proper wainscot ornaments, shelves, and partitions, completely furnish one large room. Books were also handy for all sorts of miscellaneous purposes. They were useful as providing wastepaper to wrap round candles, light the tea lamp, make bottoms to wind worsted upon, pin up the miss's hair, or make kites for the young master. They propose, therefore, to 'all people of fashion' that they should 'come into a subscription' to take four books each per annum, 'such as they shall chuse,' at 'three shillings and sixpence per book at an average'. This, they point out, will amount in all but to fourteen shillings a year—'a very inconsiderable sum to each individual, and little exceeding 4 bottles of claret'—but will total about £28,000, of which they themselves would only appropriate the small profit of the odd £8,000—'a trifling object', they observe, when compared to the 'honour and lustre' which the city will receive from it, 'and which, if we may dare so much, it wants a little'.

This satire is all very well, but of course there were people in Dublin who read books. Mrs. Delany, for instance, continually mentions the books that she and her husband were reading together in the evenings, and makes interesting comments as she goes along. They read Voltaire's *Age of Louis XIV*, Ramsay's *Life of Turenne*, Sully's *Memoirs*, Robertson's *History of Scotland*, Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, Gordon's *Life of Cæsar Borgia*, Addison's *Travels in Italy*, and much other serious literature of the same kind. For lighter reading they enjoyed novels such as *Clarissa*, which Mrs. Delany tells us she admired more and more, and the new plays and farces as they came out. Swift's library catalogue has been published, but this is hardly a fair test. Take Edward Worth, however, an eminent Dublin doctor, who on his death (in 1733) left a library of 4,000 volumes (dealing with medicine, surgery, chemistry, botany, mathematics, history, topography, and antiquities, besides many valuable editions of the ancient classics) to Dr. Steevens' Hospital 'for the use of the physicians, surgeons and chaplain of the hospital',¹ and Lord Clonmell, who had a collec-

¹ See an article on 'The Worth Library' at Dr. Steevens' Hospital, Dublin, by Dr. T. Percy C. Kirkpatrick, in the publications of the *Bibliographical Society of Ireland*, vol. i (1919), No. 3.

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tion of over 6,000 books in his house in Harcourt Street, each room of which is said to have been hung with Gobelins tapestry. Lady Morgan tells us at the beginning of the next century that in the house which she and her husband occupied in Kildare Street they had 'eight or nine hundred volumes of choice books in French, English, Italian, and German'. The Morgans were, of course, literary people, but similar collections could be found.¹

The desire for reading among the Irish gentry certainly increased towards the end of the century. The day was passing, according to Maria Edgeworth, when the gentlemen could talk only of 'claret, horses and dogs', and the ladies merely of 'dress or scandal'. She observes, in fact, at the time when she was concluding the memoir of her father that the taste for reading and literary conversation had then become so universal in Ireland that even the country gentry were taking in the London reviews, and that the merits and demerits of Byron, Campbell, and Scott were as eagerly discussed in her own country as in any part of Great Britain.

An interesting letter written by Lord Charlemont to his friend Malone describing a book sale that took place in Dublin in 1792 is preserved for us in the *Charlemont Manuscripts*. The library of the Right Hon. Denis Daly, M.P. for Galway, had been sold by his family for £2,300, but when the collection was put up to auction exactly double that sum was got for it.

'During the week of the auction [says Lord Charlemont] the Dublin world was book mad. All men bought, they who could and they who could not read, and the prices were more than London would have afforded. I am glad of it [he adds], for two reasons, because Archer [a Dublin bookseller]² is an honest man, and deserved success for the more than Irish

¹ A 'Dublin Library Society' (open to subscribers) was founded in 1791. It had a library and reading-room on Burgh Quay, and then in D'Olier Street. A 'Dublin Institution' was also founded in 1811, with a lending library and lecture hall in Sackville Street.

² According to Gilbert, the shop [80 Dame Street] of James Archer, the bookseller, was the *rendezvous* of the literary men of Dublin during the last ten years of the eighteenth century.

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spirit of his enterprise, and because four Scotch and two English booksellers were disappointed in their impudent expectation of finding Ireland a land of ignorance, where the best books might be purchased for a trifle.'

The vigorous opposition of English authors and publishers to the famous 'pirated' Dublin editions is proof in itself of the amount of reading done in Dublin, although it must be confessed that many of these editions were produced for export to America. Before the copyright law was made to apply to Ireland in 1801 many books published in England were hastily reprinted in Dublin without the permission of their rightful owners and sold at a lower price. Sometimes these Irish editions appeared simultaneously with the English ones. Sometimes they actually preceded them. In these cases copies of the sheets were taken as they came off the London printing-presses by working printers, who promptly forwarded them to those Dublin booksellers who had made this risky proceeding worthwhile. Most English authors were furious at this infringement of the rights of property, and some of them made violent protests—Samuel Richardson, for instance, who wrote a strongly worded pamphlet in 1754 in which he roundly abused the Dublin booksellers for having published his *Sir Charles Grandison* before it came out in London. Some English authors took an original line. In Pasquin's *History of the Professors of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture who have practised in Ireland*, published in London in 1796, we find this pathetic appeal to Dublin booksellers printed at the end of the volume: 'As the preceding Memoirs have been collected with much trouble and expense, and as their manifest tendency is to promote the cultivation of the Fine Arts in Ireland, and perpetuate the memory of the Professors in that Kingdom; the author presumes to hope that no Irish Bookseller will be so ungenerous as to copy his labour, and make him regret that he attended so many years to its completion.'¹

There were a great many publishers and booksellers in

¹ For 'Irish pirated editions' see *An Leabarlann* (Journal of the Irish Library Association) for 1909, vol. ii, pp. 67-77 and 'The Dublin Pirates and the English Laws of Copyright' by La Tourette Stockwell in the *Dublin Magazine*, vol. xii (No. 4), pp. 30-40.

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Dublin in the eighteenth century. Of these George Faulkner is the best known. He laid the first stone of his reputation by his friendship with Swift, who employed him as his printer and contributed to the famous journal of which he was editor. After the Dean's death Faulkner published his works in twenty octavo volumes and edited them himself. Perhaps this proves that although he was frequently snubbed by his patron—being almost insufferably vain and egotistical—he had a genuine affection for him. He had a bust of Swift in his shop, and he ordered another to be placed in a niche in front of his house in Essex Street. As he died before this was finished his nephew presented it to the authorities of St. Patrick's, who placed it—where it still is—above the Dean's monument in the Cathedral.¹ Faulkner's shop was a well-known rendezvous for literary men, and it was with the help of their patronage that he produced a much more ambitious work than Dublin had yet seen—his *Ancient Universal History*—in seven large folio volumes. Although the son of a butcher, he had had a liberal education, and it was said of him that he was 'well acquainted with men and things'. When Lord Chesterfield was in Dublin he met this 'prince of Irish printers', and was so taken with his witty talk and striking personality that he frequently invited him to the Castle. Here the Irishman would entertain the Viceroy with amusing stories while other visitors who had come on more important business would be kept waiting in the anterooms.² Faulkner knew a great many notable people in London—and every one of distinction in his native town. His dinners were very popular, for, according to Cumberland, he entertained on a grand scale—'with good meat and excellent claret in abundance'. His newspaper, popularly known as 'Faulkner's *Journal*', had a wide circulation and flourished in Ireland for many years.³

George Grierson, who also lived in Essex Street, at 'The

¹ This bust of Swift was executed by Patrick Cunningham, a Dublin sculptor.

² See an article on 'George Faulkner and Lord Chesterfield' by Rev. C. O'Connor in *Studies* (1936), Vol. XXV, pp. 292–304.

³ Faulkner's *Dublin Journal* began to appear in 1725 and continued till 1825.

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Sign of the Two Bibles', was another well-known Dublin printer. He published the first edition of *Paradise Lost* which appeared in Ireland, and a number of Latin classics—some of which were edited by his wife, a learned and charming lady, the friend of Dean Swift. Grierson's most remarkable publication was his fine folio edition of the Book of Common Prayer, which was the one used in the Irish House of Commons.¹ It is interesting to note that the frontispiece of this volume is almost an exact copy of that which was published in the edition printed in London in 1687. Dublin publishers had no more scruples in appropriating the work of British illustrators than that of the London booksellers. The Irish print-sellers also brought out pirated editions of prints and and caricatures by Gillray, Rowlandson, and other well-known artists, for which there was always a good sale in their shops. Printers had, of course, to be careful when it came to handling political material. The underground chamber in the garden of the Delany's villa at Delville, near Dublin, where Swift is supposed to have hidden the private printing-press with which he printed some of his tracts was long preserved. His printer and publisher in Dublin itself were always prosecuted whenever they could be found. Faulkner also found himself frequently in trouble with the authorities. On several occasions he was summoned to the Bar of both Houses, severely reprimanded, and on one occasion actually imprisoned.

The newspapers printed in Dublin in the eighteenth century were almost as numerous as the printers and booksellers. There was *The Dublin Intelligence*, *The Dublin Weekly Journal*, *Saunders' News Letter*, *Pue's Occurrences*, *The Weekly Courant*, *Whalley's News Letter*, *The Dublin Packet*, *The Freeman's Journal*, and many more. The majority of these newspapers, curiously enough, devoted most of their space to European and English news, and had little in their columns of purely Irish interest.² Lists of births, deaths, and

¹ See 'Notes on the Book of Common Prayer, traditionally said to have belonged to the Irish House of Commons,' by W. G. Strickland in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. 1 (1920), pp. 36-8.

² Irish newspapers of this period probably had a very limited circulation, for the masses were practically illiterate.

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marriages, accounts of robberies, duels, and executions, notices of the arrival and departure of packets—that was about all. As the century wore on, however, more attention was given to politics, and the tone of many of the newspapers became definitely patriotic. *The Censor*, which flourished about the middle of the century, was decidedly rebellious, being condemned by the House of Commons on one occasion as ‘tending to create a jealousy between the Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland’. *The Freeman’s Journal* was always in opposition to the Government, and was for a time the organ of Grattan and Flood.¹ Many of the papers stimulated interest in the Volunteer movement, and some even dared to support the United Irishmen. An Englishman travelling in Ireland in 1791 speaks of the Irish newspapers as ‘spirited and well supported’, and adds that no writings were ‘admired’ in them which were not ‘highly seasoned with patriotism and reflections on Government’.²

The Government naturally had its own Press. Editors were subsidized and provided with good-paying advertisements if they would support official policy. Faulkner’s *Journal* after his death became one of the most violently partisan on this side. It was edited by John Giffard, a Dublin apothecary. There was perpetual war between this paper and *The Press*, the organ of the United Irishmen. Giffard was very violent, and held bigoted opinions which he was not afraid of airing. The tone of both papers, as the reader may imagine, was very abusive.

None of the newspapers or journals of the time were specially distinguished for their literary quality. Walker’s *Hibernian Magazine*, which covers the period 1771 to 1811, is certainly—as it purports to be—‘a compendium of entertaining knowledge’. The *Anthologia Hibernica*, to which the poet Moore was a contributor—another monthly published during Grattan’s Parliament—was of a rather higher

¹ The *Freeman’s Journal* was first published in 1763. Essays and Letters therein of Grattan and Flood and other opposers of Lord Townsend’s administration in Ireland (1767–72) were collected and reprinted in Dublin, in 1773 under the title of ‘Baratariana.’

² See R. B. McDowell’s *Irish Public Opinion* (1750–1800), 1943.

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order.¹ Satirical verse was much in vogue throughout the eighteenth century and especially at the time of the Union. Some of this was good and pointed, but most of it was undistinguished. Every one who could turn a phrase seems to have been anxious to publish his efforts—a natural but regrettable impulse. It was to politics rather than literature, however, that writing men gave their best energies. This was the age of political pamphlets in Ireland.

The gentlemen of Ireland were not entirely occupied by drinking and duelling, as is sometimes supposed. The foundation of the Dublin Society is direct proof to the contrary. This society—the first of its kind in Europe—was founded in 1731 for ‘the improvement of Husbandry, Manufactures and other useful Arts’. Though its general aims reflected the spirit of the eighteenth century, which was nothing if it was not universal, the improvement of agriculture was the first care of its members. These were originally chiefly Protestant gentlemen of the landlord class who knew the countryside and appreciated its difficulties. But the Society soon attracted all sorts and conditions of men—peers, bishops, Government officials, judges, army officers, barristers, and doctors. The Viceroy also occasionally lent his patronage.

The work of the Society was eminently practical. Books on farming by English and Dutch writers were circulated among the people, new agricultural implements were introduced, and all sorts of experiments were made. Premiums were offered to those who could produce the best wheat, hops, and flax-seed. Tillage and the planting of trees were both strongly encouraged. When the English farmer, Arthur Young, came over to Ireland in 1776 he had already established a European reputation as an agriculturist. He came into touch with the Society as a matter of course, and was probably present at its meetings. He did not think much of Irish agriculture, which was behind that of England, but he loved an ‘improving landlord’ and met plenty of them in Ireland.

¹ The ‘*Anthologia Hibernica*’ was published in four volumes by Richard Edward Mercier and Co., Booksellers, No. 31 Anglesea Street, between 1793 and 1794

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On 14th November 1745, Lord Chesterfield, who was Viceroy, was elected President of the Dublin Society. He was very interested in Ireland, which he looked upon as a young country with a hopeful future. In a letter written from London in 1747 to Thomas Prior,¹ who was then acting as secretary, he says:

'They [the members] have done more good to Ireland with regard to arts and industry, than all the laws that could have been formed; for unfortunately there is a perverseness in our natures which prompts us to resist authority, though otherwise inclined enough to do the thing if left to our own choice. Invitation, example and fashion with some premiums attending them, are, I am convinced, the only methods of bringing people in Ireland to do what they ought to do—and that is the plan of your society.'

Chesterfield considered poverty to be Ireland's arch-enemy. He could not therefore do otherwise than approve of any form of economic benevolence.

In 1749 the Society was incorporated by George II, who made it a grant of £500. At first it was run entirely on gentlemen's subscriptions, but was subsequently aided by the Irish Parliament, who voted it considerable sums. It is said that Berkeley wrote *The Querist* to help the Society in its work. This work was certainly carried out in accordance with his ideas. Everything was done to encourage home industries. Prizes were offered for the making of beer, glass, hemp, paper, and hats. The special encouragement given to the silk and linen industries will be spoken of later.

The Society gradually extended its activities. In 1792 an important collection of minerals was purchased, and the foundation of a natural history museum laid. In 1794 a Botanical Garden was opened, and the next year a chemical laboratory established. A large library was gradually built up and opened to the public in 1803. At the end of the century Professors of Botany and Chemistry were appointed, and courses of lectures were given in these subjects, as well

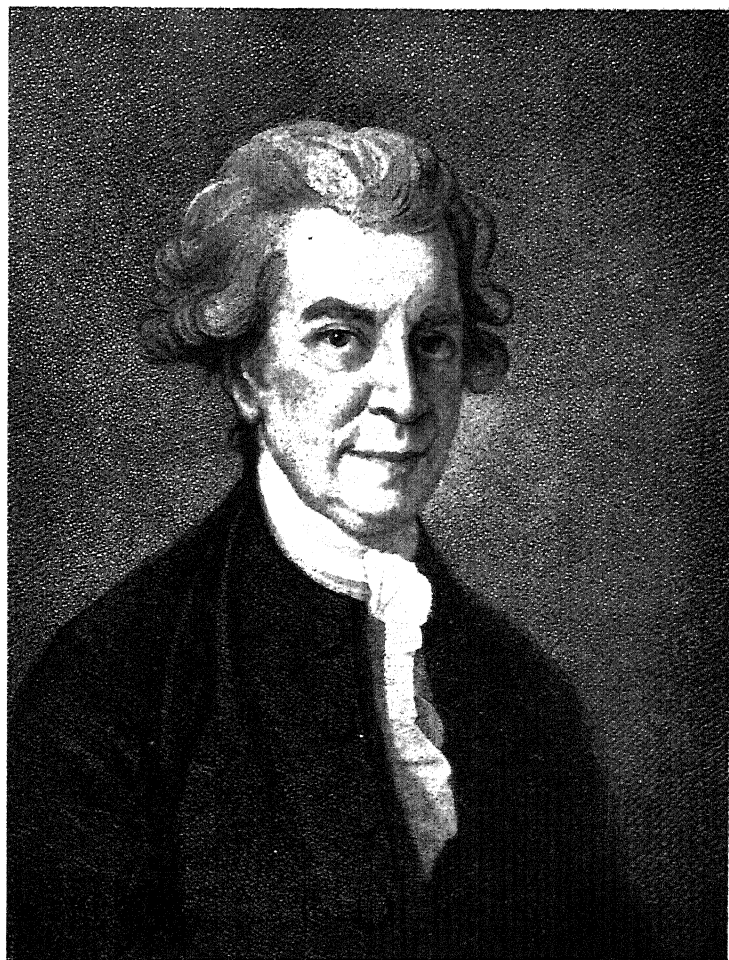
¹ Thomas Prior (1682-1751), educated at Trinity College, Dublin, was the founder of the Dublin Society in 1731 and one of the most philanthropic of the Anglo-Irish gentry. There is a monument to him in Christ Church Cathedral.

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as in natural philosophy, mineralogy, and mining. In its early days the Society used to meet in Trinity College or at the Parliament House. In 1756 it moved to Shaw's Court, off Dame Street, and in 1766 to Grafton Street. Between 1796 and 1815 it had premises in Hawkins Street which were described by contemporaries as 'magnificent'. This house, which occupied the site of the future Theatre Royal, contained the museum, a drawing school, an exhibition room, a library, a chemical laboratory and lecture room, round which was a gallery capable of seating 800 people. In 1815 as the premises were thought to be damp Leinster House was purchased, and here the Society, known as the Royal Dublin Society when George IV became its patron, was housed from 1820 until recently.

About 1740 the Society began to encourage interest in art, and shortly afterwards established a drawing school under a draughtsman named West, who had studied with Boucher in Paris. The school was opened in George's Lane, but soon moved to Shaw's Court, where instruction was given in painting and modelling as well as in drawing. Everything was done to encourage poor artists; scholarships were given, for example, to those who desired to continue their studies in London or abroad. The great majority of the students, however, were tradesmen—carpenters, calico-printers, silversmiths, cabinet-makers, surveyors, and so on, who came to the school to acquire a practical knowledge of drawing, architecture, and mechanics. A number of artists proper trained at this school later became famous—George Barret, for example, son of a clothier in the Liberties, who had a successful career in London, and was one of the founders of the Royal Academy, and Hugh Hamilton, the portrait-painter, of whom it is told that he earned so much from his London clients that he was forced to put off till the evenings the gathering up of the guineas which he had flung into his crayon boxes during the rush of the day.

The great majority of Irish artists went to live in London owing to lack of patronage at home—Nathaniel Hone, the portrait-painter, one of the original members of the Royal Academy; James Barry, who decorated the great room of the Society of Arts at the Adelphi; Robert Carver, who became



THOMAS SHERIDAN

From an engraving of a portrait by R. Stewart



MR. AND MRS. BARRY IN THE CHARACTERS OF JAFFIER AND
BELVIDERA IN 'VENICE PRESERVED'
From John Bell's *British Theatre* (1776)

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one of the most popular scene-painters at Drury Lane; and many more. Some of the best engravers practising in London were also Irish—James MacArdell, for instance, whose work was highly praised by Reynolds, and Edward Fisher, son of a Dublin hatter, who engraved the portrait of *Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy* and other well-known plates. A number of Irishmen, however, remained in Dublin, especially those who were lucky enough to find patrons. There were Robert Hayley, the portrait-painter employed by the Earl of Moira to decorate his mansion on the quays; George Mullins, who worked for Lord Charlemont; and James Latham, known as the 'Irish Vandyke', who painted Peg Woffington and other well-known people. Of engravers the most notable were Patrick Halpen, who reproduced a number of frontispieces for the 'pirated' editions of Dublin book-sellers, and John Brooks, who kept a printseller's shop on Cork Hill.

Anthony Pasquin (or, to give him his real name, John Williams) who was in Ireland for a time, thought little of the artistic sense of the Irish gentry. 'I must lament', he wrote in 1796, 'that the gentlemen of Ireland do not sufficiently evince that kind disposition towards the Fine Arts which is indispensably necessary to their establishment. When I was in that generous nation, I walked through every province and have to regret that I saw but few instances of a supreme taste.' He saw a great many copies which the owners took to be originals, and confesses that he gave offence by casting reflections upon them. There were people in Dublin, as he admits, however, who had fine collections—Lord Moira and Lord Charlemont, the Duke of Leinster and the Marquis of Waterford, the Earl of Farnham and Lady Harriet Daly, to mention only the chief.¹ In a letter written from Delville

¹ O'Keeffe in his *Recollections* (Vol. I, p. 32) mentions a number of people in Dublin who had fine collections of pictures in the middle of the century. The Marquis of Waterford (Tyrone House), the Hon. Mrs. Pomeroy (Merrion Square), the Provost of Trinity College (Provost's House), Major Sirr (Dublin Castle), and Francis Johnston, the architect, who built a rotunda at the rear of his house in Eccles Street, to house his collection; all these had fine pictures.

Major Sirr, head of the Dublin Police 1796-1826, is said to have added to

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dated 10th December 1750, Mrs. Delany describes a visit that she and her husband paid to William Bernard, Bishop of Derry:

'Last Monday we dined at the Bishop of Derry's. . . . I was very well entertained with looking over the Bishop's pictures. He has a very good collection by above two hundred different masters' hands, original pictures, well preserved, and in good order—not many Italian but the greatest variety of Dutch and Flemish I ever saw in one collection.'

The Delanys were also entertained in the Bishop's library, which Mrs. Delany describes as 'well furnished with portfolios of fine drawings and prints.'

There were a number of foreign artists who came to Dublin and flourished there at different times during the eighteenth century—Vanderhagen, a Dutch landscape painter who made drawings for the tapestries that were hung in the House of Lords; Waldré, the Italian who was invited to Dublin by the Duke of Buckingham, then Viceroy, for whom he had worked at Stowe; Peter De Gree, born in Antwerp, of whom the La Touche family were patrons. A few English artists also found their way over to Dublin. Of these Francis Wheatley was Chief.¹ In 1780 he painted a picture of the interior of the Irish House of Commons showing Grattan speaking and the Gallery full of spectators. Another of his pictures, equally well known, shows the famous meeting of the Volunteers on College Green in 1779, when Volunteer fever was at its height and special celebrations were held in honour of King William's birthday. The Maltons, father and son, were other

his treasures during the troublous period of the Irish Rebellion 'in a not very honourable manner'. After the Union most of these collections were dispersed. The writer of an article on 'The Fine Arts in Dublin Fifty Years Ago' in the *Irish Builder* for 1st October 1875 remarks 'only a tithe of the paintings that formed the Dublin collections of fifty years ago are now in this country'.

¹ Francis Wheatley (1747–1801) was the son of a London tailor. He made rapid progress as a painter and was elected a Fellow of the Society of Artists in 1771. The set of prints entitled 'The Cries of London' engraved after drawings by him is well known. In order to avoid his creditors he left London in 1779 and came to Dublin, where he painted several important historical scenes as well as portraits, etc. In 1784 he returned to London.

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Englishmen who settled in Dublin. Thomas Malton originally kept an upholsterer's shop in the Strand, but left London in 1785 owing to financial difficulties and settled in Dublin as a 'Professor of Perspective'. His son James, who had accompanied his father to Ireland, was employed as a draughtsman during the building of the Custom House. In 1799 he completed his series of beautiful drawings of Dublin buildings from which the well-known set of 'Views' was engraved.¹

There do not seem to have been many notable sculptors in Dublin. Of Irishmen Edward Smyth, employed by Gandon, was the chief. From England came Virpile, who was invited to Dublin by Lord Charlemont to model the ornaments for his Casino at Marino, and Van Nost, who designed a beautiful equestrian statue of George II, which used to adorn the centre of St. Stephen's Green but is now, alas, lost to Dublin.² At this time the profession of die-sinker was a profitable one, for coats of arms and crests, metal decoration for coaches, and gilt buttons for servants' liveries were much in request. William Mossop, an Irishman who became the chief of Dublin medallists, started life in this trade. He gradually turned to engraving portraits, however, and making seals for corporate bodies and societies. In this work he displayed so much skill and artistry that he soon achieved a considerable reputation. In 1786 he was employed to make the Prize Medal of the Royal Irish Academy. On one side of this was a portrait of Lord Charlemont, the President, in the uniform of the Irish Volunteers; on the other a figure of Hibernia, surrounded by the emblems of astronomy, chemistry, poetry, and antiquities, and seated on a pile of books. Lord Charlemont was so pleased with this design that he gave Mossop permission to visit his house whenever he liked in order that he might study his fine collection of medals and coins.³

¹ There is an account of Malton's *Views of Dublin* in an article entitled 'Notes on the Rise and Progress of Printing and Publishing in Ireland' in the *Irish Builder* 15th November 1877.

² This statue, erected in 1758, was subsequently looked upon as a political symbol and frequently mutilated. A few years ago it was at last destroyed.

³ There is an article by W. Frazer on 'The Medallists of Ireland and their Work' in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. xvii (1885-6).

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Lord Charlemont's house has been mentioned as being the 'Holland House of Dublin'. He was descended from a family originally from Oxfordshire who had settled in Ireland in Queen Elizabeth's reign. He had spent most of his youth abroad, where he had made the acquaintance of many eminent people. He met all the English of consequence in Rome—made friends with Hume at Turin, visited Montesquieu at Bordeaux, and frequented Lord Albemarle's at Paris. Between 1764 and 1773 he lived in London, where he was on friendly terms with Johnson and Burke and other members of their circle. Whatever his preferences may have been, he thought it his duty to live in Ireland, and began to build his house in Rutland Square about 1770. Here he lodged the art treasures collected in the course of his travels, together with his magnificent library. Although he took a prominent part in politics as member of the House of Lords and leader of the Volunteers, he was not really a statesman or even a man of action. His letters to his friend Malone, the Shakespearian critic, reveal his true character. He had excellent taste, a passion for books and rare editions, and a wide knowledge of literature. 'From the camp to the peaceful shades of Marino, and his excellent library, was Lord Charlemont's usual transition,' wrote Hardy, his biographer. 'Literature,' he adds, 'was his constant resource, aided by an agreeable and varied society.' Macaulay says of him that he 'gave the tone to the society of the age'. It was not his love of literature or art, one feels, but his personal character that attracted people towards him. Although anxious for Irish Parliamentary independence, he was without prejudice or violence, a man of sense and honour in whom every one put his trust.¹

Perhaps Lord Moira of all Charlemont's contemporaries was his nearest counterpart. 'He was very conversant with the polite arts,' according to Hardy, and his library, to which every one had access, was 'a noble collection of books'. His manners, like those of Charlemont, were as polished as any that could be found in this age of fine manners. 'There was nothing artificial, nothing forced in his good breeding,' we

¹ See *The Volunteer Earl. Being the Life and Times of James Caulfield first Earl of Charlemont*. By M. J. Craig (1948).

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learn; 'it was a courtesy always flowing, never wearying, directed to every one, but still measured; never losing sight of the humblest as well as the highest in his company, never displaying his rank and never departing from it.' His hospitality has already been mentioned in connexion with Moira House, where he and his wife held one of the chief salons in Dublin.

Some of the Viceroys also did their best to encourage the fine arts in Dublin. The Duke of Rutland, for instance, brought some of his own pictures over to Ireland and hung them in the Viceregal Lodge in the Park. During his Lord-Lieutenancy (1784-7) he favoured a scheme to establish a school of painting, together with an academy to encourage artistic production. Although a prospectus was actually printed, nothing came of the plan, as the Duke died suddenly and public interest seems to have lapsed. A Society of Artists had been formed, however, in 1765, which held exhibitions of pictures in Napper's Great Room, in George's Lane. These were so successful that a permanent exhibition room was erected in South William Street (now a Civic museum), where picture shows were held up to 1780. In 1800 another society of Irish artists was formed under the patronage of the Duke of Richmond. This was the forerunner of the Royal Hibernian Academy, which was founded in 1823.

In 1684 a Philosophical Society had been established in Dublin on the lines of the Royal Society in London, with Sir William Petty as President, but the society came to grief during the Jacobite Wars and was finally broken up. The eighteenth century was the age of learned academies, and it is surprising that the society formed in Dublin in 1785 to promote the study of 'science, polite literature and antiquities' did not materialize sooner.¹ The leading spirits of this society (the Royal Irish Academy) were Lord Charlemont and Lord Moira, the Right Hon. John Hely-Hutchinson, Lord Rokeby (the Primate of Ireland), Richard Lovell Edgeworth, the Bishop of Killaloe, and a number of Fellows of Trinity

¹ The foundation of the Royal Irish Academy was, however, actually preceded by two other historical and scientific associations—the Physico-historical Society (1744) and a select committee (appointed to make inquiries with regard to Irish antiquities) of the Dublin Society, organized in 1772.

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College. Charlemont was president until his death in 1799, when Richard Kirwan took his place.¹

Kirwan was a typical scientist of the period, a chemist of great energy and enthusiasm. He had studied much in France, and lived for some years in London, where his researches were considered to be so valuable that he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. He returned to Dublin in 1787, and gathered round him all those who were interested in science. He wrote on a large number of subjects and was in touch with most of the leading chemists in Europe, by whom he was known as the 'Dublin Philosopher'. He had started life as a Catholic, but, having picked up an anonymous work on religious controversy on a Paris bookstall which he is said to have studied regularly at his hairdresser's, he turned Protestant. By the end of his life he had become a Unitarian—an interesting spiritual journey. He had many eccentric habits. He would put the chain on the hall door while he was at dinner, as he could not bear anyone to see him eat. He also kept a menagerie of pets, which included some fierce dogs and an eagle caught in the west of Ireland. The following interesting account of the gatherings at his house in Cavendish Row, Dublin, is given by his biographer:

'Each Wednesday at 6 o'clock was the time appointed for the admission of his friends, and then they were politely and hospitably received. At seven the knocker was removed from the hall door, and this was the signal to persons arriving at that hour that he was not to be seen; for he felt disinclined to disturb his guests with introductions or the noise of the knocker. Those already admitted were entertained with tea and coffee, and other refreshments, but above all with conversation enriched by extensive knowledge, travel, and intercourse with the most remarkable men of the age. During this interval Mr. Kirwan sat or reclined on a sofa, rolled in a cloak, and another thrown over his lower limbs—his hat on, a long screen behind him, and a blazing fire before him, no

¹ The Royal Irish Academy at first held meetings in the Navigation House, Grafton Street, and in 1852 removed to Dawson Street to a house (built in 1769) which was once the residence of Thomas Knox, second Viscount Northland.

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matter whether winter or the dog-days. He always solicited permission from his company to wear his hat, and was allowed the privilege of wearing it even in courts of justice; nay, he wore it at the levees of the Lords-Lieutenant, which he constantly attended in the capacity of a State officer, being Inspector-General of his Majesty's Mines in Ireland. After entertaining his company until 9 o'clock in summer, or half-past eight in winter [his biographer continues], he commenced a certain routine of operations. He took out his watch and wound it—it was now the duty of those who were familiar with his habits to remind him that his hour was come, or, if they were all strangers, he announced it himself, but required the company not to move till he could escort them. His next process was slowly to remove the buckles of his shoes and knees, the conversation still continuing. After this, the company was marched off, under his escort, to the head of the staircase, and then they dispersed to their respective quarters, while he retired to bed, from which he rose next morning at 4 o'clock in summer and sometimes later in winter, to resume his accustomed studies.'

Kirwan seems to have made nothing by his numerous works, but he cared little for money. He was also indifferent to honours. Lord Castlereagh offered to confer a baronetage upon him in expectation that his influence would assist in accomplishing the Union. This dignity he declined. He died in 1812. There were, we learn, 800 or 900 gentlemen in the funeral procession, which was followed by 'a numerous train of carriages of the nobility and gentry'.

Although the main work of the Royal Irish Academy was scientific, the members took a great interest from the first in Irish history and antiquities. The old Irish culture had lain buried for two centuries under the weight of the Protestant Ascendancy. But the Catholic masses still had their poets and hedge-schoolmasters who carried on the old Gaelic traditions, and kept alive the soul of the people. It was not Gaelic feeling, however, which interested the typical late eighteenth-century gentleman, but the rather remote past. This vaguely stirred his imagination, and made an appeal to his sensibility.

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In the first half of the eighteenth century there had been a few people in Ireland who took an interest in Irish history. Thomas Molyneux, for instance, had written in Boate's *Natural History* on early remains, while Walter Harris had published his *Hibernica, or Some Ancient Pieces relating to Ireland* in Dublin in 1750. In 1773 Charles Vallancey, an English officer who had settled in Ireland, produced an Irish grammar, and Edward Ledwich published his book *The Antiquities of Ireland* in 1789. The Academy soon set to work on the same lines. Applications were made to various learned bodies abroad for copies of ancient records relating to Ireland, and as a result those valuable manuscripts were acquired which form the nucleus of the great collection which the society now possesses. Other societies of lesser importance soon made their appearance, such as the Gaelic Society of Dublin,¹ the most active members of which were William Haliday, who translated part of Keating's *History of Ireland*, and Edward O'Reilly, who compiled an Irish-English dictionary.

It is well known that none of the work done at this time in Irish history and archæology was particularly scientific. Scholars had not yet acquired the technique of research and relied largely upon their imagination. Men like Vallancey, however, at least did their best to arouse popular interest, and it was they who prepared the way for those who put Gaelic studies on a sounder basis. The frontispiece to the edition of Ledwich's *Antiquities of Ireland* which was published in Dublin in 1803 is a typical illustration in an antiquarian book of the period. Here we see a view of a ruined Gothic church entwined with ivy. In the foreground is an elegant young woman who is helping a more matronly figure to rise up out of a tomb. Underneath is written, 'ANTIQUITY in her RESEARCHES discovers the GENIUS of ANCIENT TIMES.' This surely breathes the spirit of the Romantic Revival,

¹ A sign of the times was the foundation of the Irish Society in 1819, formed to promote the education of the Irish through the medium of their own language. An Irish version of the Scriptures was circulated, and also an Irish Prayer Book. The Gaelic Society, founded in 1806 for the preservation and publication of ancient Irish documents, became the Hiberno-Celtic Society in 1818.

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which was making itself felt in Ireland in a hundred other ways. The translations of Irish poems published by Charlotte Brooke, the friend of Maria Edgeworth, the passion for harp-playing and old Irish music, Dean Kirwan's sermons, Lady Morgan's novels, the verses of Thomas Moore—all were an expression of the sentimentality of the time.

No one can have been more typical of the romantic antiquarian than Gabriel Beranger. He was of Huguenot origin, born in Rotterdam, an artist by profession who kept a print shop in Dublin. His main pleasure in life seems to have been in making archæological tours, on which he produced such admirable sketches and plans of ruins and objects of antiquarian interest that it was said that no one could draw an old castle, a cromlech, or a Round Tower better than he. According to Sir William Wilde, who wrote an interesting account of Beranger's researches, he used to travel through the country in a long scarlet frock-coat, yellow breeches, top-boots, and a three-cornered hat, taking with him a tall staff and a long measuring tape for his work. Sometimes he was mistaken by the peasants for a French spy and met a good deal of unwelcome attention, but he was always well received by the gentry, who placed horses, carriages, and boats at his disposal for expeditions in which they themselves were interested.¹ The Protestant gentry in the course of the eighteenth century had become more Gaelic in sympathy than they had supposed. They had been thrown back on themselves by the political struggle with England, and had begun to look around them at what could be seen at home.

The Act of Union certainly curtailed the intellectual activities of Dublin. There were fewer libraries and booksellers and less printing and publishing. The amount of printing done in the Irish capital almost immediately slackened off. There were no Parliamentary Acts or debates to be published, and with the temporary settlement of the political problem the stream of polemical literature went dry. Many wealthy people had left the country and those that remained bought fewer books for there was less money to spend and their absorption in politics diminished their interest in

¹ See an article on 'Beranger's Dublin Drawings' by A. G. Little in the *Dublin Historical Record*, Vol. VIII.

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literature. The extension of the Copyright Act to Ireland had in itself restricted the right of publishing which had been exercised by the Dublin booksellers. Their desire to produce books also diminished as they realized that English publishers were now in a better position to take risks than themselves. According to a writer in 1815, the publishing trade of Dublin was then chiefly confined to the production of 'devotional and moral tracts, the printing of handbills and playbills, some half-a-dozen newspapers and one or two magazines'.¹ Owing to the exodus of the rich to London less money was naturally in circulation. In a report made on the affairs of the Dublin Society in 1819 the writer deplores the fact that so many of the annual subscriptions were in arrears.

Yet as time went on a new age came into being. From the Union to the end of the Georgian period was a dull time in the history of Dublin University. The number of students fell off, the Provosts were not particularly distinguished. There was scarcely any literary output. But the old Elizabethan foundation which in the eighteenth century had produced Berkeley and Burke soon recovered its prestige. In the 30's the number of students increased and Trinity College could again boast of eminent scholars within its walls of whom the most distinguished perhaps was Sir William Rowan Hamilton the discoverer of the science of quaternions.

Sir Walter Scott who visited Dublin for the first time in 1825 was enthusiastically entertained by the learned societies and had the degree of Doctor of Laws conferred upon him by the University. He was also rapturously received by the populace. 'When he entered a street [in his carriage] the watchword was passed down both sides like lightning, and the shopkeepers and their wives stood bowing and curtsying all the way down, while the mob and boys huzza'd as at the chariot wheels of a conqueror. I had certainly been most thoroughly unprepared', says his son-in-law, Lockhart, who accompanied him and to whom we owe the above description, 'for finding the common people of Dublin so alive to

¹ 'Since the Union the amount of works published in the metropolis of Ireland has decreased by about 80 per cent.' Gilbert's *History of Dublin* (1861), Vol. I, p. 188.

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the claims of any non-military greatness'. According to the same authority, 'Illustriously as Ireland had contributed to the English library, Scott had always been accustomed to hear that almost no books were now published there, and fewer sold than in any other country calling itself civilized; and he had naturally concluded that 'apathy and indifference prevailed as to literature itself, and of course, as to literary men.' His own reception came as a pleasant surprise, and had an effect, no doubt, on his opinions.

A selection from famous names will show that literature and scholarship was not dead in nineteenth century Dublin. Samuel Lover, Charles Lever, and Joseph Sheridan Lefanu were all outstanding novelists.

Among the poets was James Mangan perhaps 'the greatest of the poets of Irish birth', while the scholars and antiquaries included John O'Donovan, George Petrie, Sir Samuel Ferguson, Bishop Reeves and Sir William Wilde. Of journalists Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, who edited the *Nation* newspaper and wrote the life of Thomas Davis, was chief, and there was the intellectual Davis himself, the leader of the Young Ireland movement who breathed a new spirit into Irish nationalism and provided it with much of his own idealism. Those who wish for further evidence of the revival of intellectual activity in nineteenth century Dublin should look through the pages of the *Dublin University Magazine* of which Lever was editor for a time, and to which Trollope contributed when he was in Ireland. We have already spoken of Trinity College which was now about to enjoy one of its most active periods.

The liberal and reforming spirit of the age also provided educational and cultural facilities for the great Catholic majority, who, becoming more vocal, were gradually coming into their own.

CHAPTER VI

The Theatre

An attention to the theatre will always indicate the good taste of the age, as the neglect of it will manifest the contrary.

‘Essay on the Various Taste for Amusement,’
in Walker’s *Hibernian Magazine*, April 1773

Among the other amusements of this Metropolis are two theatres. The old house in Smock Alley, not so large as the new in Crow Street, which is nearly the size of that of Drury Lane, is one of the most elegant and best constructed theatres, for the advantage of both audience and actors, of any in the three kingdoms.

PHILIP LUCKOMBE, *A Tour through Ireland* (1780)

I n the eighteenth century the city of Dublin was said to be the fifth capital in Europe, and was often described as ‘another London’. That she had a stage, and a vigorous stage, goes without saying. The great stars of the London world proceeded more naturally from triumphs in the English capital to Dublin, the second city in the Empire, than to Edinburgh or Bath. Garrick and Mrs. Siddons, Samuel Foote and Tate Wilkinson, John Edwin, George Anne Bellamy, Mrs. Abington and the Kembles, all played before Dublin audiences. The Dublin theatre in turn was regarded as an excellent nursery or forcing-house for those whose ambition it was to act in London. Peg Woffington and Mrs. Jordan, Mossop and Spranger Barry, to mention but a few of those actors and actresses who shone at Covent Garden or Drury Lane, had all served their apprenticeship in Dublin.

In the Middle Ages mystery and miracle plays were performed in Ireland as elsewhere, while in Tudor times we hear of the ballroom of the Castle being converted into a theatre, and of plays being acted, as in London, in the houses of the rich. But these were isolated efforts, for it was not until Charles I’s reign that a regular playhouse was estab-

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lished in Dublin. The founder was John Ogilby, a Scotsman who originally entered the household of Strafford to teach his children dancing. He accompanied his patron to Ireland, and was rewarded for fidelity to the Viceroy by being appointed Master of the Revels. In the little theatre which he opened in St. Werburgh Street, Dublin, a play of Ben Jonson and other pieces of the period were performed, but owing to the outbreak of the Rebellion in 1641 this theatre was closed, and in the troubled times that followed it appears to have been destroyed. Although Ogilby ended his life in London as a translator of the classics and a printer of splendid books, he evidently had an affection for Dublin, for he returned there at the Restoration, becoming Master of the Revels again. Gathering subscriptions from the nobility and gentry, he built another theatre in Essex Street, near the Castle, and this playhouse, subsequently known as Smock Alley Theatre, was opened in 1662. Unfortunately, the place was built in such a hurry that nine years afterwards it collapsed. A performance was being held at the time; many persons were injured and some were killed. Apart from this calamity, which naturally damped the spirits of playgoers, the Jacobite Wars practically put a stop to all theatrical performances. Once these were over, however, the theatre reopened—the occasion being celebrated by a performance of *Othello* which was given free in honour of the Boyne.

Ogilby, however, who died in 1676, was succeeded in the management of Smock Alley by a Mr. Ashbury (d. 1720), who was followed in turn by his son-in-law, Elrington. Both were Englishmen—actors in touch with the London stage. Among those who made their first essay at acting at their theatre were Wilks and Quin, while Booth and Farquhar (author of *The Recruiting Officer*) also appeared there. The flourishing state of the Dublin theatre at this time is proved by the frequent attendance of the Duke of Dorset, the Viceroy, and by the popularity of Elrington among his fellow-citizens. They are said to have greeted him after a year's absence in England with public rejoicings. Bonfires were lit in the streets, and the bells of the churches were rung. Smock Alley prospered for a time, but its growth was soon checked by the number of other theatres and places of

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amusement that sprang up in Dublin during the first half of the eighteenth century. The most serious rival to the old playhouse was Madame Violante, an Italian woman who opened an amusement booth in Fownes' Court, moving later to larger premises in George's Lane.¹ She was herself an expert walker on the tight-rope, and at her booth comic dances and acrobatic feats could be seen and pantomimic shows were given. She had theatrical ambitions as well and gave representations of plays—*The Beggar's Opera*, for instance, for which she trained a company of children, of whom Peg Woffington, sprightly offspring of a Dublin fruit-seller, was one. In 1733 a theatre was opened in Rainsford Street, in the Liberties, and the following year yet another for more fashionable audiences in Aungier Street. These were not the only providers of amusement. A Music-hall had been established in Crow Street,² not far from the Castle. There were Ward's Theatre in Dame Street, a miscellaneous entertainment known as Ashton's Medley in Patrick's Close, and a puppet-show in Capel Street, where O'Keeffe tells us that he derived much pleasure as a child from the 'antics of Punch and his merry crew'. With so many centres of attraction in a comparatively small town,³ we are not surprised to learn that none of them was very flourishing or that the fortunes of Smock Alley were beginning to decline.

But a remarkable personage soon made his appearance who was to be the saviour of Smock Alley and to revolutionize the Dublin stage. This was Thomas Sheridan, son of the Dublin schoolmaster who was the friend of Swift, and father of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the dramatist. Although born in Ireland, he was educated at Westminster School, from which he proceeded to Dublin University, where he graduated in 1739. He seems to have taken early to the stage, but at any rate we find him acting in Dublin in 1743 and playing at Drury Lane soon afterwards. In 1745 he returned to

¹ George's Lane is now South Great George's Street.

² The Music Hall in Crow Street disappeared in 1757, and on its site was built Crow Street Theatre, which opened on 23rd October 1758.

³ There were eight fair-sized theatres and fifteen minor ones in London between 1700 and 1750. See Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Early Eighteenth-century Drama* (1925), Appendix A.

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Dublin with a theatrical reputation and became the manager of Smock Alley Playhouse. Sheridan was what would be described to-day as decidedly 'highbrow'. In later life he spent most of his time in giving lectures on elocution and drawing up plans for the education of gentlemen. His head was now full of schemes for producing what he called 'good and chaste' plays, and for what was just as important—educating audiences to appreciate them. From the first he was faced with a strictly practical difficulty—the domination of the theatre by its disorderly elements. There were actually two outstanding evils. The first was the rowdiness of the upper gallery, which sometimes prevented the players from being heard; the second was the invasion of the stage and green-room by young men of fashion who obstructed the actors and pestered the actresses.

The upper gallery was not, as in London at this time, free to servants, but as the price of admission was only twopence it attracted a noisy and quarrelsome mob and was usually overcrowded.

'The galleries [wrote a contemporary] assumed a right of calling for what tunes they pleased, but not always agreeing upon the tune, one party roared out for one, and the other was as clamorous for another. As the musicians could not possibly play both together, they thought that playing them one after another would satisfy all parties. But that would not do. If they played the one the advocates for the other thought they had a right to precedence and saluted them with a volley of apples and oranges. At last [adds this writer] the outrage rose to such a height that they threw glass bottles and stones, cut several of the performers and broke their instruments.'

This state of affairs eventually became so intolerable, indeed, that the band were often sent to play behind the scenes until the pit was full, when they returned to their seats in the orchestra box with less risk of violence.

As for the other nuisance, Sheridan tells us that there were sometimes more than 100 persons on the stage at a time, who mixed with the actors in such a way as scarcely to be distinguished from them, and also that any fashionable young

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man, 'by an acquaintance with the actors, by the bribe of a shilling, or by virtue of a big look and an oak sapling', could get admission behind the scenes. Here he would speedily be initiated into the mysteries of Mars and Venus and begin forthwith to play bully and rake. These were the same young men who spent their mornings in crowding in to watch the rehearsals, or in swaggering about at Lucas's Coffee House challenging all and sundry to duels; but the evening was the time when their spirits were most exuberant, to judge by their behaviour at the theatre.¹ In *An Humble Appeal to the Publick* (the most important of the numerous tracts written by Sheridan) striking instances are given of misbehaviour on the part of these gentlemen.² One night a fashionable young man who was on the stage after the play was over took it into his head to amuse himself by cutting to pieces a freshly painted piece of scenery. On being asked by an actor to leave off he threateningly waved his sword and asked how a 'player' dare talk to a 'gentleman'. Again, during Garrick's acting of *King Lear* on his second visit to Dublin in a scene with Peg Woffington, who was playing Cordelia, a young gentleman suddenly leaped upon the stage and tried to take indecent liberties with the actress. 'Mr. Garrick', says Sheridan, 'was silent but could not help casting an eye of indignation on so brutal a scene.'

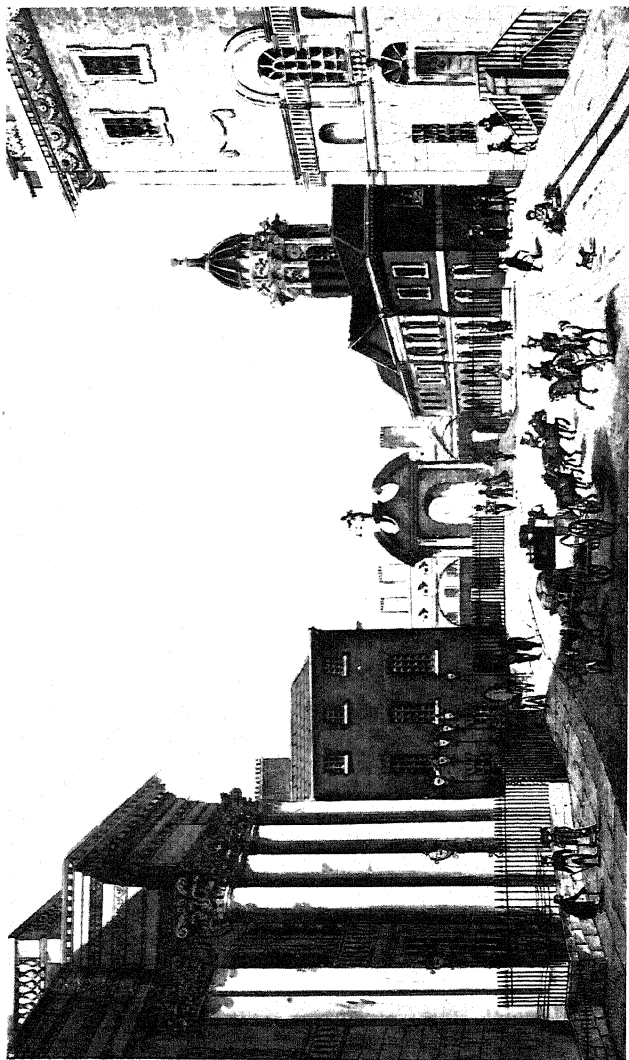
Garrick probably was indignant, for he had already

¹ The wild behaviour of Dublin bucks did not diminish in the course of the century. We read in the *Hibernian Magazine* of 1777 of how a party of fashionable young men, with their faces blackened, went in search of some one whom they imagined to have insulted one of their party. They entered a coffee house in Essex Street, and, being disappointed in their search, broke windows, chandeliers, looking-glasses, chairs, and forms, and then 'sallied out in a kind of phrenzy' and ransacked several other taverns. They then proceeded to Smock Alley, where they knocked down a servant because his flambeau was lighted, cut a chairman for having a candle in his lantern, and fractured a man's skull 'whose life is still despaired of.'

² During a disturbance at one of the Dublin theatres Lady Sarah Lennox describes in a letter from Castletown 25th June 1787, how William Robert, the second Duke of Leinster, endeavoured to leap over the stage box in order to investigate the cause of the uproar, and was caught on the iron spikes protecting the front of the stage, remaining impaled until assistance could be obtained. As a result of this accident it is said that he was maimed for life.



ALDERMAN GEORGE FAULKNER
From Walker's *Hibernian Magazine*, September 1775



THE CASTLE GATE AND ROYAL EXCHANGE, DUBLIN
From an engraving by S. F. and H. Brocas (1820)

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satirized the troublesome 'fine gentleman' in his play of *Lethe*, and as manager of Drury Lane was to triumph over him in the theatre.¹ 'How do you spend your evenings, sir?' asks Æsop, the chief character in the play. 'I dress in the evening', the Fine Gentleman replies, 'and go generally behind the scenes of both playhouses; not, you may imagine to be diverted with the play, but to intrigue, and show myself. I stand upon the stage, talk loud, and stare about—which confounds the actors, and disturbs the audience: upon which the galleries, who hate the appearance of one of us, begin to hiss and cry, "Off, off," while I undaunted, stamp my foot so—loll with my shoulder thus—take snuff with my right hand, and smile scornfully—thus. This exasperates the savages, and they attack us with vollies of suck'd oranges and half-eaten pippins.' Æsop then inquires, 'And you retire?' To which the Fine Gentleman replies, 'Without doubt, if I am sober—for orange will stain silk, and an apple may disfigure a feature.'

The inconvenience caused to the actors by the crowds of spectators upon the stage is graphically described by Tate Wilkinson in an appendix to his *Memoirs*. He shows us Quin as an old man, with the 'heavy dress of Falstaff', being 'so cruelly encompassed around' that it was several minutes before he could pass through the numbers that wedged and hemmed him in. And Mrs. Cibber arrayed for Juliet in a full white satin dress with the then indispensable large hoop, in all her pomp of woe, shaken and taken prisoner as it were by 'foes sarcastic and barbarous'.

It was not only that the physical inconvenience was represented by the players, but the atmosphere proper to the theatre was destroyed. The author of *The Actor* wrote in 1755:

'One thing more there is, that hurts the truth of the representation more than all:—the suffering a part of the audience to be behind the scenes. The keeping up of the illusion of carrying on an appearance of reality is the great merit of

¹ David Garrick was manager of Drury Lane for the most part of the period 1747–76. He succeeded in banishing the 'fine gentlemen' from the stage in 1762.

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theatrical representation, but that is impossible under this disadvantage. Let the decorations of the House, the dress, deportment and recitation of the players be ever so proper, this destroys all. The head of some cropped beau among a set of full-bottomed conspirators destroys all the look of reality.'

Ideals apart—and Sheridan tells us that he looked upon the stage as 'a school for manners and virtue'—the very fact that one part of the house was a bear-garden and the other a brothel—as he puts it in the emphatic language of the period—kept respectable people away. It was not unusual, we learn, to see only twenty persons in the pit, and not a creature in the boxes. But in less than two years the theatre was reformed. By dint of a mixture of perseverance and persuasion, and with the help of the students of the University, with whom he was very popular, Sheridan succeeded in quieting the upper gallery, resisting the intrusion of dissolute young men behind the scenes, and keeping the stage clear for action. He paid the actors, hitherto in a chronic state of mutiny through arrears of salary, punctually, and secured respectable players who offered no target for insult.

'All ranks of people [wrote the manager], crowded to a theatre where the amusement was [now] on a rational footing, and where they were sure of enjoying it without interruption. . . . There have been [he tells us] sometimes more than thirty clergymen in the pit at a time—many of them deans and doctors of divinity—though formerly none of that order had ever entered the doors, unless a few who skulked in the gallery disguised. Persons venerable for age, station and character appeared frequently in the boxes, and gave a sanction to the reformation.'

There was not, he adds with pride, upon finally surveying his handiwork, 'a more polite or decent assembly in Europe, than what was generally to be found in the playhouse of Dublin.'¹

¹ Sheridan received strong support from certain members of the public, for after the riot of 1754 (see pp. 229–30), a select committee of gentlemen drew up 'Rules and Regulations to be observed by the several gentlemen resorting to Playhouses'. Before the curtain went up, or between the acts, every spectator

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We know from Miss Bellamy's *Apology* and other sources that Sheridan was held in high estimation by the people of Dublin, but he had flaws in his character. Dr. Johnson once remarked of him that he 'wanted neither Parts nor Literature; but that his Vanity and Quixotism obscured his merits'. He was certainly lacking in tact. He had exasperated those who disliked the restrictions imposed by his reforms, and he made a number of personal enemies. The growing opposition to his strict rule over the theatre came to a head in what is known as the 'Kelly riot'—a disagreeable incident that foreshadowed others to come.

Riots in the theatre, leading to uproars which prevented players from being heard or putting a stop to performances altogether, were not uncommon even in England during this period, and these disturbances seem to have broken out on the flimsiest pretexts. We read in a London newspaper of 1762:

'Thursday night there was a great riot at Covent Garden Playhouse, without the least plea or pretence whatever, occasioned by the gentry in the upper gallery calling for a horn-pipe, though nothing of the sort was expressed in the bills. They went so far as to throw a quart bottle, and two pint bottles upon the stage, which happily did no mischief, but might have been productive of a great deal.'

There were riots over the alteration of charges for admission 'hollow, shout or groan', 'assault with orange peels the musicke core', 'break fiddlers' instruments', 'crack ill-mannered jests on their betters', and be 'as barbarous in all parts as possible', but the minute the curtain was drawn up 'this humour was to cease' and no one was to 'stir after', except when 'some rant engaged their wonder, or smutty jest their applause'. Miss La Tourette Stockwell points out in her book on the Dublin Theatres (1938) that although the causes and quality of the confusion shifted and changed throughout the eighteenth century the theatre continued consistently tumultuous, so that Crow Street in 1800 was almost as noisy as Smock Alley had been 100 years earlier. 'There were still catcalls, the banging of doors, the loud conversation of drunks and the throwing of bottles on the stage and at the orchestra.' 'How often are the public disturbed by the squalling of children in the midst of some of the finest scenes of Kemble and Siddons,' says a writer in the *Hibernian Magazine* for July 1804, who describes these nuisances, which he says, 'call loudly for a theatrical police.'

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sion at Drury Lane in 1763, while at the same theatre on 8th November 1755, had occurred the most serious outbreak of all. This originated in a patriotic demonstration on the eve of the war with France against some French dancers in the ballet of *The Chinese Festival*, and resulted in the destruction of theatre property to the extent of some thousands of pounds.

If Londoners used the theatre as an emotional outlet we are not surprised to find that the more excitable citizens of Dublin did the same. At a representation of the comedy of *Æsop*, by Sir John Vanbrugh, which was given at Smock Alley on 19th January 1747, a young Galway gentleman named Kelly, who was obviously drunk, climbed over the iron spikes which in those days protected the front of the stage, and made his way to the green-room, where he addressed one of the actresses in such a coarse manner that all the women fled to their dressing-rooms in terror. Pursuing one to her door, which was promptly locked in his face, he made such a fearful noise that the manager had to be summoned. Sheridan ordered the theatre servants to take Kelly away, and conduct him back to the pit. He went quietly enough, but once returned to his seat seized hold of a basket belong to an orange woman, and when the manager came on to the stage in his character of *Æsop* began, as far as his drunken condition would permit, to aim at him with the oranges. One of these arrived with such force that it dented the iron of the false nose that Sheridan was wearing into his forehead. Stopping abruptly in his part, he appealed to the gentlemen of the pit, and Kelly was quieted. But after the play was over the foolish young man walked into Sheridan's dressing-room, and gave out such terrible abuse that he received what he had only the right to expect—namely, a flogging. This was, however, the beginning of more active opposition to the autocrat of Smock Alley, for Kelly went forth bitterly complaining among his friends, who shortly afterwards took revenge by visiting the theatre in force and wrecking both stage and green-room.¹

Sheridan soon stirred up further trouble for himself by forming a 'Beefsteak Club', which met at his house adjoining

¹ A long account of these riotous days is given by Edmund Burke (then a student at T.C.D.) in a letter to his school friend Richard Shackleton.

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the theatre. Weekly dinners were given to which all the most important people in Dublin were invited, and although party feeling was then running high, toasts were drunk in honour of the Government. No women were invited to these convivial gatherings, with the exception of Peg Woffington, who happened to be in town for the season. This famous actress had gone very far since the days when Madame Violante had first taught her to dance. She had played Sylvia in *The Recruiting Officer* with great success in London, where she had also had an overwhelming triumph as Sir Harry Wildair—the great breeches part in which she was painted by Hogarth. It is said that she frankly declared that she preferred the society of men to that of women, because she had found that her own sex talked of nothing but silks and scandal. She was certainly gifted with a lively intelligence, which, joined to great vivacity and unfailing good humour, made her an ideal bottle companion. She was of course elected president of the Club, and sat in a great chair at the head of the table, where it was rumoured that her lively witticisms served chiefly as sauce for politics.

At this time the play running at the theatre was Miller's tragedy of *Mahomet the Imposter*, in which are certain passages where political corruption is condemned. When these lines were repeated by the actor they were always violently encored, the Patriot party seizing the opportunity of showing their dislike of the Castle. On 1st March 1754, on the eve of what was to be a fateful performance, Sheridan gathered his company together and gave them a lecture on party manifestations in the theatre. They should not, he said, be encouraged in any way by the actors, for they destroyed all taste in the audience and struck at the 'very vitals of the stage'. On the next night when West Digges as Alcanor had repeated the popular lines they were as usual vigorously encored. But Digges, who had resented the manager's lecture, instead of repeating his speech, stood still where he was and explained to the audience that he had 'reasons' for not doing what they wished for. There were at once loud cries for the manager, but Sheridan, being anxious to avoid the glass bottles and stones that were hurled upon the stage when the people were angry, refused to appear, and as the

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calls got louder and louder decided to leave the theatre. Peg Woffington then attempted to bring the audience to reason, but had no success, and when she finally left the stage a serious riot began. The gentlemen in the pit desired the ladies to withdraw, and then proceeded to tear up the benches, pull down the wainscot, and smash the chandeliers, which were of great value. They next mounted upon the stage, slashed the finely painted curtain with their swords, and destroyed the scenery. The mob from outside then forced their way in, plundering and stealing everything they could lay their hands on, and the building would certainly have been burned had it not been for the theatre servants, who with great courage drove the rioters outside and barricaded the doors, dispersing them finally by firing down from the windows.

After years of incessant labour, in which he had made a success of his theatre and spent, according to his own estimate, £9,000 upon it, Sheridan's stock of courage ran out, and he decided to leave Dublin. Churchill in the *Rosciad* ranks him next to Garrick as a tragedian, and he had no difficulty in securing an engagement at Covent Garden. Perhaps he thought with Hazlitt that 'wherever there is a playhouse the world will go on not amiss', but at any rate he seems to have felt that he could not abandon Dublin, for we find him returning there in 1756. He undertook the management of Smock Alley again, but only to encounter fresh difficulties. In October 1758 a new and larger theatre, described by Mrs. Delany as 'very handsome', was opened in Crow Street under Spranger Barry's management.

Barry was born in Dublin, where his father was a silversmith. He was tall and handsome, had a powerful and harmonious voice, and was generally considered to be one of the greatest actors of the day. He had started his career in Dublin, but soon moved to London, where his triumphs in Shakespearian tragedy aroused the jealousy of Garrick. Rich said of him that he was 'capable of wheedling a bird from the tree and squeezing it to death in his hand', the bird on this occasion being Henry Woodward, who had already established a reputation as a comic actor when he was persuaded to move to Dublin. Barry may have been 'the wonder and

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darling of every audience', but he was unfortunately not the ideal partner for a business enterprise. He was too fond of giving magnificent entertainments, and appears always to have lived beyond his income. Woodward was of a prudent and thrifty disposition, but his savings were soon lost, and he presently returned disgusted to London. For a time, however, Barry and his partner maintained a very strong company at Crow Street. They engaged Mossop and Foote, Sowden, Sparkes, Mrs. Fitzhenry, and Anne Dancer,¹ who was to become Barry's wife. Although the theatre was not paying, they spared no expense and staged splendid productions. Sheridan at Smock Alley did his best to compete, and as a last hope of drawing support decided on pantomime. He engaged Theophilus Cibber, the comedian, and Maddox, the wire-dancer, and hired a set of theatrical properties from Sadler's Wells, which then specialized in comic opera. Unfortunately, the ship that was carrying actors and scenery across the Channel was blown out of its course by a storm, and all and sundry were lost off the coast of Scotland. Sheridan could stand no more. He abandoned Smock Alley in 1759 and, went to live under more favouring circumstances in England. He had tried to do for the Irish stage what Garrick was to accomplish in London, and, although unrewarded by an ungrateful public, left his mark on the theatre.

Among the interesting events that had occurred during his management was the visit to Ireland of Garrick himself. Garrick first came to Smock Alley in the summer of 1742, being then a very young man fresh from his triumph as Richard III at Goodman's Fields. He naturally played this successful part in Dublin. He also appeared in *Lear* and *Hamlet*, which he acted at Smock Alley for the first time. In the first volume of his published *Correspondence* is an anonymous letter from an enthusiastic Dublin playgoer, who criticizes his pronunciation and objects to some mannerisms

¹ Mrs. Dancer (1734-1801) (*née* Street) was playing in Portsmouth and York about 1756. She played Cordelia to the *Lear* of Spranger Barry, Juliet, Desdemona, and other parts at Dublin 1758-67. She subsequently gained great reputation at the Haymarket. Her last appearance was at Covent Garden as Lady Randolph, her great character.

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of his acting. The writer concludes by way of comfort, however, with the prophecy that with 'a little more experience' Garrick would be 'the best and most extraordinary player that ever these kingdoms saw'. Unfortunately, not many details of this first visit are recorded, but we know that it was a great success. The weather was very hot during that summer in Dublin and an epidemic of some sort broke out. This was dubbed 'Garrick fever', for it was connected in the popular mind with the great crowds that flocked to see him act.

Garrick paid his second visit to Dublin under Sheridan's management in 1745. Besides Hamlet and Lear he played Orestes, Falconbridge, Iago, and the comic part of Bayes in *The Rehearsal*. Lord Chesterfield was Deputy at the time, and attended the theatre in state. It is related that when Garrick and Sheridan waited upon him with lighted candles in their hands to conduct him to his box, he spoke very kindly to Sheridan, but did not even return Garrick's salute. Perhaps he wished in his official capacity to show special favour to the Irishman, but he disliked Garrick in comedy, and as the play was *The Rehearsal* it was possibly this which accounts for his rudeness. Despite Lord Chesterfield, Garrick's performances were of course a success, and from his second Dublin visit, as from the first, he departed in glory. 'Satiated with caresses from all ranks of people and after having added considerably to his stock of money,' wrote Davies, his biographer, 'Mr. Garrick left Ireland.'

Among the notable women who acted for Sheridan was Anne Bellamy, then at the height of her powers, and, according to Tate Wilkinson, so 'charming and elegant' that she was 'the universal toast' in Ireland in 1747. She was the illegitimate daughter of Lord Tyrawley, whose relations in Dublin were glad to acknowledge her until she went back to her mother, or at least adopted her way of life. One of the tales that she tells in her famous *Apology* relating to her first visit to Dublin in 1745 confirms what has already been said of the discreditable state of the Irish stage. During a performance of Dryden's *All for Love*, at which Lord Chesterfield was present, and she was acting the part of Cleopatra with applause, an incident occurred that she describes as follows:

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'A gentleman who stood near the stage door, took a very unallowable method of showing his approbation. Being a little flushed with liquor he put his lips to the back of my neck as I passed him. Justly enraged at so great an insult, and not considering that the Lord-Lieutenant was present, or that it was committed before such a number of spectators, I instantly turned about and gave the gentleman a slap in the face. Violent and unbecoming as this sudden token of resentment appeared, it received the approbation of Lord Chesterfield, who rose from his seat and applauded me for some time with his hands—the whole audience as you may suppose following his example. At the conclusion of the Act, Major MacCartney came in by order of his Excellency to Mr. St. Leger (that was the gentleman's name), requesting that he would make a public apology for this forgetfulness of decorum, which he accordingly did. I have reason to believe [she adds] that this incident contributed in a great measure to a reform that Mr. Sheridan with great propriety soon after made agreeable to this regulation—no gentlemen were in future to be admitted behind the scenes.'

According to her own showing, however, the behaviour of actresses upon the stage was not much better than that of gallants in the audience. During a performance of *Antony and Cleopatra* one of the players having a ragged tail to her dress had the misfortune to drag a broken kettledrum after her upon the stage, whereupon the charming Bellamy, who was acting Cleopatra, burst into loud and unseemly laughter. 'Nor could I compose my countenance', she confesses without shame, 'until the asp had finished my night's duty.'¹

¹ While acting on one occasion in *All for Love* in which Barry and Sheridan were also playing, Mrs. Bellamy relates in her *Apology* (1785), Vol. I, pp. 130–6, that the Manager procured for her a magnificent dress that had once been worn by the Princess of Wales. To this garment she sewed on some real diamonds which had been lent to her by a fashionable lady who occupied a box in the theatre. Mrs. Furnival who was also playing, being jealous, stole the dress and ornaments and appeared in them upon the stage, whereupon the owner of the jewels called out loudly from her box: 'Good Heavens, the woman has got on my diamonds!' This produced consternation amongst the audience, who cried out repeatedly—'No more Furnival.' Mrs. Bellamy declares that her rival actress, 'thus hooted for the impropriety of her conduct'

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In 1760, on her second visit to Dublin, this actress was not nearly so successful with her audience as on her first appearance, for she was no longer in her prime. 'The roses had fled,' wrote one who saw her, 'the once young and lovely Bellamy had turned haggard.' On this occasion she was accompanied by two footmen and three maids, and took a house in Kildare Street. O'Keeffe tells us that as a young man he often saw her splendid sedan chair, with its superb silver-lace 'liveries', waiting for her near the theatre. He may also have heard of the enormous bills that she ran up in Dublin, chiefly for wine, and of how, although in receipt of a handsome salary, she was arrested for debt in her chair on her way to the theatre. Tate Wilkinson remarks that she left Dublin without a single friend to regret her loss, which seems, indeed, only too likely.

Sheridan had abandoned Dublin by the time of Miss Bellamy's second visit, and his place at Smock Alley had been taken by Henry Mossop. The new manager was also an Irishman—educated at Dublin University. He began his acting career in Dublin, where he is said to have got his name of the 'teapot actor' on account of his favourite attitude—one hand on hip, the other stretched upward. When his fame grew he was invited to Drury Lane, and here was held to be inferior to none as tragedian save Garrick and Barry. A serious rivalry between Smock Alley and Crow Street now began. When one manager secured a popular play from London the other would work feverishly to produce it also, but with richer dresses and scenery and a superior cast. Both Barry and Mossop came to grief. If Barry was extravagant Mossop was more so. We are told that he would sometimes leave the theatre with a hundred guineas in his pocket and return home after an evening spent in gay circles without a penny. He made money, but was seldom in a position to pay either his actors or tradesmen.

During this period of intense rivalry many eminent actors and actresses appeared on the Dublin stage. Mrs. Pritchard (the greatest Lady Macbeth before Mrs. Siddons) acted at and 'disappointed of the acclamations she expected to receive on account of the grandeur of her habiliments', could not go on with her part, and 'very prudently called fits to her aid', and concludes her story with the reflection that 'Honesty will be always found to be the best policy'.

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Crow Street, besides Foote and those already mentioned as having been engaged by Barry, while Macklin,¹ Mrs. Abington,² and Tate Wilkinson were the chief attractions at Smock Alley. Samuel Foote³ visited Dublin on several occasions, and even produced one of his plays there. He was not only a great comedian, but a superb mimic and wit. Foote had a great affection for the Irish, perhaps because he had some affinity with them. His biographer tells us that in his journeys to Scotland and other places his love of indolence often 'threw a lion in the way', but that in his trips to Ireland he saw nothing but 'profit, pleasure and reputation'. He was, indeed, extremely popular in Dublin, not only in the theatre but in the houses of the rich. He was a special favourite with Lord Townshend, the Viceroy, and was often asked to the Castle. On one occasion he attended a levee, when crowds

¹ Charles Macklin (1697), born in Ireland and educated in Dublin, author of the farce *Love à la Mode*, and other successful plays, was one of the greatest comic actors of this period. Having made a reputation in London and having already appeared in Dublin under Sheridan's auspices and again in 1761 and 1763, he performed at the Little Theatre, Capel Street, in the winter of 1771, and at the beginning of 1772 undertook the management of Crow Street, together with one Dawson, the successor of Spranger Barry. So favourable was his reception in Dublin that he thought at this time of taking up his residence there, and shipped all his furniture, plate, pictures, and books on board a trader, which, however, unfortunately grounded on the Irish coast, and practically all his property, which included the manuscript of a treatise on *The Science of Acting* on which he had spent many years' labour, was lost. In 1772 Macklin was back in Covent Garden though he visited Dublin again in 1785. Although then an old man he was engaged by Daly to act at Smock Alley at £50 a night. His last appearance on the stage was at Covent Garden, in May 1789, when he was dressed for Shylock, but after a few words he broke down in his part. He never acted again.

² 'About the year 1759, Mrs. Abington was in great celebrity in Dublin, the leader of fashion, and favourite of the ladies of highest rank.' O'Keeffe, *Recollections* (1826), Vol. I, p. 48.

³ Samuel Foote (1720-77), actor and dramatist, was educated at Oxford. Later he acted at Drury Lane, the Haymarket, and Covent Garden. His plays include *The Knights*, ridiculing Italian Opera, *The Englishman in Paris*, *The Devil upon Two Sticks*, etc. He was much engaged in litigation, and several of his plays were suppressed. Dr. Johnson was strongly prejudiced against him but the comedian made him laugh and he had finally to own that he was 'irresistible' (Boswell's *Life of Johnson*).

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flocked to see him and to hear his jests. No one apparently was disappointed with the entertainment. The actor's *bons mots* were spread through the town and treasured, we may be sure, for long afterwards.

Foote's wit, and his imitations of all and sundry upon the stage, won for him the name of the 'English Aristophanes', and of these none was more successful than his caricature of Faulkner, the Dublin printer. Despite the esteem in which this gentleman was held by his fellow-citizens, there was something rather absurd about him. Although he was small and fat and had a wooden leg, he adopted a grand and pompous air that delighted those with more humour. He was ridiculed as Peter Paragraph by Foote in a play produced at the Haymarket in 1762 which was so successful that it was brought over to Dublin. Faulkner sent his employees to hoot the actor from the stage, but the comedian took him off so well that every one stayed to enjoy the fun, and went from the theatre laughing. After this Foote was requested by several citizens of Dublin to burlesque their friends, but there can have been few persons so tempting to the mimic as the pompous printer.

Tate Wilkinson set off to Ireland in Foote's company towards the end of 1757. He was then only eighteen and practically unknown, but he had already made an impression upon Garrick, who introduced him to Foote. Tate's father had just died, leaving him practically destitute, but he had a few shillings in his purse, which was all that his mother could spare him. 'My old black', he tells us, 'was my only suit, and a small pair of bags easily contained my wardrobe.' After a terrible passage, the cabin being 'wedged like the Black Hole of Calcutta', he arrived in Dublin very sick, and after some miserable days spent in an hotel on Essex Quay hired a coach and drove to some friends across the river. Although he was far from well, his homesick spirits were cheered on crossing Essex Bridge by observing the number of 'lamps, sedan chairs, hackney coaches, and footmen with flambeaux', which put him in mind of London; but when he arrived at the house of his friends he was hardly able to stand, and collapsed with a fever. They found him lodgings near by, and the famous Dr. Lucas was sent for. When he was better

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he was taken out for airings in a coach, and an elegant suit of clothes was bought for him. Although he was ill for three weeks, Foote left him severely alone, but when sent for was affable enough and promised to introduce him on the stage of Smock Alley, as already arranged between them. Tate tells us how he sat in the green-room alone on the night of his first appearance, when, peeping through a hole in the curtain, he could see such a full and splendid audience that the boldest might have been dismayed. He could also hear the loud applause and roars of laughter which Foote's sallies were drawing forth. When he was called upon the stage himself he was so completely scared that Foote had to take him by the hand, lead him forward, and present him to the audience. Greeted with welcoming applause, he began his imitations of London players, with which his hearers were so delighted that they called for more. Encouraged by this reception, he gave Barry and Peg Woffington in *Macbeth*, which called forth so much laughter that he tells us he felt he could hardly go on. His head was a little turned no doubt by the way in which he was being received, for, seized at this point by a sudden impulse, he began to imitate Foote, who was sitting on the stage behind him. The audience were hugely delighted to see the great mimic taken off by a youth, and loud bursts of applause continued after the curtain. Foote naturally was displeased, but this did not trouble Tate, who believed that he was now on the high road to fortune. Sheridan offered the young man a salary of three guineas a week, and he remained in Dublin till March, when he departed with £130 in his pocket, in 'step, air, and mind' a very different person from what he was when he left London. Shortly afterwards he appeared as Othello in Bath, being announced on the bills as 'Mr. Wilkinson from the Theatre Royal, Dublin'.

In December 1759 Wilkinson set off for Ireland once more, in 'tip top spirits', as he says, 'at the thought of seeing dear Dublin again'. He had not forgotten the kindness of his friends, or the fact that his first guinea had been made there. On his benefit night, 15th February 1760, the play was Home's tragedy of *Douglas*, which was given with an after-piece, *High Life below Stairs*, a farce very popular in London. The keenness of Dublin playgoers is shown by the

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fact that, although Mossop and Mrs. Fitzhenry were playing at Crow Street and the streets were covered with snow, the crowd was so great that the pit was crammed a few seconds after the doors were opened and even the orchestra filled 'with gentlemen that got over'. On this occasion the receipts were larger than had ever been taken at Smock Alley on any one night.

In 1767 Barry retired from Crow Street, which was taken by Mossop, who thus became the manager of both theatres, but in 1770 the pressure of competition from a playhouse that had started in Capel Street was so strong that he yielded up Crow Street to Dawson, the rival manager, and in 1772 retired from Smock Alley in favour of Thomas Ryder. Ryder took over Crow Street also in 1776, but gave place to Daly at Smock Alley in 1781. He went bankrupt soon after. He kept a splendid carriage which he could not really afford, and built a grand house that he was not able to finish. His wife had won a handsome prize in the lottery, and it was this, it seems, that had led him astray. In addition to Smock Alley, Daly presently took over the other theatre as well. But, although he spent a great deal of money on Crow Street, enlarging the pit, adding boxes, and improving the lighting, and managed to attract to Dublin persons of such eminence as John Philip Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, he soon had to contend with the usual difficulty of Dublin managers—the rivalry of another playhouse.

A small but very elegant theatre had been opened in Fishamble Street in 1793.¹ This was directed by the Earl of Westmeath, a nobleman who had made the Grand Tour and had extravagant ideas as to how to run a theatre. He had the curtain elaborately painted, the seats covered with scarlet cloth, and the boxes draped in white satin, while footmen in splendid liveries attended the fashionable audience that soon filled his playhouse. The 'Gentleman's Theatre', as it was called, proved a stumbling-block to Daly, but he was no more of an ideal manager than his predecessors. He had a passion for duels, and was an inveterate gambler. It was not long before he got into money difficulties. In 1797 he trans-

¹ This theatre opened on 6th March 1793, with *The Beggar's Opera* and *The Irish Widow*. Performances here were continued till 1796.

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ferred his interests in the theatres to Jones, a capable man who had worked with Lord Westmeath at Fishamble Street.

The brightest features in the history of the Irish stage towards the close of the eighteenth century are the appearances of Mrs. Siddons, who played in Dublin on several occasions in most of her great parts. She wrote of a visit she paid to Ireland in 1783 as having answered all her expectations both of profit and pleasure. 'I was received by all the first families there with the most flattering hospitality', she says: 'the days that I passed with them will ever be remembered as among the most pleasurable of my life.' Boaden states in his *Memoirs* of the great actress that in this particular year, when she played in Dublin only for a few nights, she carried over a thousand pounds away with her, an enormous sum for a player in those days, even though queen of the English stage.

An Englishman travelling in Ireland in 1779 had declared that Smock Alley was 'one of the most elegant and best constructed playhouses' in the three kingdoms. But it had been on the down grade for long, and in 1790 was closed and turned into a warehouse. Towards the end of the century the lack of money in the Irish theatrical world was painfully obvious. In the last years of Smock Alley during a performance of *Othello* the musicians refused to play because their salaries were unpaid, and the manager himself, who was acting the Moor, was forced to leave the green-room between the acts and step down into the orchestra box, where he tried to keep the audience in good humour by playing the fiddle. The actors, unless they were London stars, had great difficulty in obtaining payment. They had sometimes, indeed, to resort to strong measures to secure their wages. O'Keeffe relates how one night during a performance at Smock Alley an actor whispered into the ear of Mossop, who was playing Lear, and whom as Kent he was supporting in his arms, 'If you don't give me your honour, sir, that you'll pay me my arrears this night before I go home, I'll let you drop upon the boards.' Mossop in great alarm replied, 'Don't talk to me now,' but, the answer being, 'I will—I will—I'll let you drop,' he had to promise to pay. We are glad to learn that the

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man went home with his wages that night, although the pockets of other and more important members of the company remained empty.

John Edwin, the English comedian, who also worked with Mossop, adds his testimony to that of O'Keeffe, when he tells how when he was in Dublin in 1765-6 the players had to stand in the evenings round the theatre doors to get money as it came in to buy candles to dress by and redeem from pawn the clothes that they needed for the night's performance. The actors were not only often unpaid, but were subjected to an irritating system of 'forfeits' which reduced their profits considerably. We learn from an account of the Irish stage published in 1792 of the heavy fines that were imposed under Daly's management for 'not being ready at the time of the beginning' and 'for coming to business intoxicated'. Something may be said in favour of these. But there was a long list of minor offences, such as 'peeping through the green curtain' or 'looking at the Viceroy' as he entered the playhouse, for which the penalties were so heavy that an actor's salary would often be cut down by comparatively harmless misdemeanours to less than fifteen shillings a week.¹

'Managers in London,' wrote an English gentleman who was visiting Dublin in 1790, 'realize princely fortunes. Here on the contrary their circumstances are always embarrassed by the undertaking.' The Irish managers had certainly special difficulties to contend with. Of these the chronic state of political tension was the most disagreeable. This led to frequent disturbances in the theatre, which were apt to

¹ An amusing story is told in John Edwin's *Eccentricities* (1791), Vol. II, pp. 142-3, to illustrate the embarrassment of an actor at Crow Street, in 1776. John Henry Johnston of Covent Garden having borrowed 10s. 1d. from one Jemmy, who kept a Tennis Court in Dame Street, and having failed to return the money though frequently applied to, was interrupted in his singing of 'Sigh no more, Ladies', in *Much Ado about Nothing*, by a chanting from the gallery—'Jacky Johnston—Jacky Johnston—Oh, you owe me, you owe me, you owe me, ten and a penny.' This odd incident created general amazement and much laughter amongst the audience, until, the money being conveyed by the necessitous actor to Jemmy, the latter ceased his song, the general laugh subsided, and 'things returned to their proper channel.'

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occur on awkward occasions. For instance, when Mrs. Siddons was acting in Dublin during the Lord-Lieutenancy of the Duke of Rutland, the audience made such a noise to show their dislike of the Viceroy, who had supported the commercial policy of the Government, that not one word of the play could be heard from beginning to end. 'I thus had the honour,' wrote Mrs. Siddons in describing a scene which must have been highly distasteful to one accustomed to act in silence, 'of participating in the abuse with the representative of Majesty.'¹

Another stumbling block for Irish managers was the fact that the citizens of Dublin generally preferred English players to their own. Enormous sums had to be paid to induce prominent actors to leave the English capital, and once players had made any sort of reputation in Dublin their first thought was to leave it for London. In a curious poem, entitled *Familiar Epistles*, written by John Wilson Croker, the essayist, Frederick Jones, who was the chief theatrical figure in Dublin towards the end of the century, was strongly criticized for his management. The chief charges that were made against him were that the plays he produced were poor, and that he did nothing to encourage the talents of Irishmen. Jones's reply was that Dublin audiences had only themselves to blame. They were 'a vulgar and unjudging crowd' who would rather see a 'company of Indian jugglers' or an 'Italian puppet show' than a good play. He charged them, moreover, with having no appreciation of any actor that had not the 'London stamp' and of doing nothing themselves to encourage their fellow countrymen. Jones was a man of parts, and when he took up his pen to answer the author of the *Familiar Epistles* he also wrote in verse, of which the following is a fair sample:

¹ Sometimes actors unexpectedly gave toasts upon the stage, as for example, George Stayley (1727-79), author of *The Life and Opinions of an Actor*, who, in his character of Lovel in the farce *High Life* in the scene in which he and his friend are represented as drinking, gave the following toast on the stage of Smock Alley in 1760—"The glorious and ever to be revered memory of (God rest his bones!) King George II. Prosperity to Ireland, in spite of the Devil and all his Imps!" For this he was dismissed by Mossop.

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*Dublin no market is for wit—
'Tis common—no one values it—
But we export it; and our parts
Bear highest price in foreign marts:
And genius, vendible as food,
Follows, where the market's good.*

*Did Southerne, Farquhar, Congreve, Steele,
Macklin, or Murphy ever feel
Their duty, or their interest bound
Their muses to their native ground?
Did Goldsmith, Sheridan, or Burke
E'er for an Irish salesman work?*

This is rather severe criticism from a Dublin manager, in view of the number of London stars who had made their reputation in Ireland, yet there was considerable truth in it. 'I have seen', wrote Edmund Burke in a little paper which he issued in Dublin during his undergraduate days, 'what they call a polite assembly sit in rapture a full half-hour at the gestures of a foreign dancer and after reward him with the loudest applauses, while an endeavouring native who has racked his lungs in their service met with inattention or had his words drowned in their clamours.'

For the rest the Dublin theatre during the greater part of the eighteenth century was very much like that of London. There was the same rivalry between playhouses. The hostility between Smock Alley and Crow Street or Crow Street and Capel Street finds its counterpart in the opposition between Drury Lane and the Haymarket or between Covent Garden and Drury Lane. In both places managers had a similar difficulty—the struggle for decent and orderly behaviour on the part of actors and audiences. Both London and Dublin had their riots and uproars, which were so frequent in the earlier part of the century that they necessitated the presence of soldiers with drawn bayonets upon the stage. The technical improvements in the theatre introduced in the course of the period naturally found their way from London over to Dublin. The old playhouses were lit on gala occasions by wax lights, but at ordinary times by tallow

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candles stuck into tin rings or circles hanging from the middle of the stage, which were snuffed now and again by the actors, as Sir Jonah Barrington describes. Later we hear of chandeliers over the boxes, from which on one unhappy occasion at Smock Alley the feathers of a lady's headdress caught fire; but before the end of the century these primitive arrangements (which included the row of candles stuck in front of the galleries) were banished, and shaded lighting, more suitably placed to set off stage and actors, was introduced. The desire for show and spectacle that characterized the period from about 1760 onward led to more elaborate scenery and improved mechanical devices, while the change in public taste resulted in both scenery and stage costumes becoming more appropriate. 'I remember', says Barrington in his *Personal Sketches*, 'seeing Old Mr. Sheridan perform the part of Cato at one of the Dublin theatres: I do not recollect which: but I well remember his dress, which consisted of bright armour under a fine laced scarlet cloak, and surmounted by a huge white bushy well-powdered wig (like Dr. Johnson's) over which was stuck his helmet.' Fanny Kemble tells us how her mother described to her Garrick acting in *Macbeth* in a full court suit of scarlet, knee-breeches, powdered wig, and pigtail,¹ and Mrs. Siddons in *The Grecian Daughter* with piles of powdered curls and a forest of feathers on top, high-heeled shoes, and a portentous hoop. These appearances struck a later generation as absurd, but Mrs. Kemble assured her daughter that it never occurred to the audiences of those days to think that their favourites looked other than they might have done.

The plays acted in Dublin at this time were, of course, the plays in vogue at the period. Shakespearian tragedy was always popular;² so were comedies and farces, and towards

¹ Charles Macklin (1697-1797), for whom see page 235, n. was the first to act *Macbeth* in Scottish garb instead of the military costume sanctioned by David Garrick.

² Every important English edition of Shakespeare produced in the eighteenth century was reprinted in Dublin, where, between 1725 and 1800, people of every rank witnessed altogether more than two productions of the plays of Shakespeare. See La Tourette Stockwell, 'Shakespeare and the Dublin Pirates', in the *Dublin Magazine* for July-September 1929.

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the end of the century operas and pantomimes. Sometimes a play was produced in Dublin which fell flat there and was later a success in London—such as Foote's piece *The Minor*, which made fun of the Methodists. Sometimes, as with Macklin's comedy *The True-born Irishman*, or *The Irish Fine Lady* (first acted at Smock Alley in 1763), it was the other way about. 'I believe the audience are right', said Macklin when his play failed in London; 'there is a geography in humour as well as in morals which I had not previously considered.'

Apart from a few productions—which, of course, include the comedies of Goldsmith and Sheridan—the ordinary plays of the period were dull enough. As museum pieces they are not without interest, but, judged on their merits, they are generally either too artificial or too sentimental for modern taste. *The True-born Irishman*, a farce extremely popular with Dublin audiences, has been mentioned, and is a case in point. The scene is laid in the Irish capital, where Mr. O'Dogherty, a country gentleman of ancient family, is at his wits' end—for, having allowed his newly married wife to pay a visit to London (in compensation apparently for disparity of years between them), he finds she has returned to Dublin with a passionate admiration for everything English and a hearty contempt for all that is Irish. The lady has become full of fashionable affectations, and has even gone the length of changing her name—being no longer, as the old man bewails, the 'modest, good-natured, domestic, obedient, Irish Mrs. O'Dogherty,' but the 'travelled, rampant, high-lif'd, prancing, English Mrs. Diggerty.' Presently a Mr. Mushroom, the upstart agent of an Irish nobleman, appears and gives himself such airs that he passes for a Count, though in reality only the son of a London pawnbroker. This contemptible individual carries on an intrigue with the lady through her maid, by whom he finally makes an assignation in O'Dogherty's own house. But the old gentleman has been intercepting his letters, and when Mushroom arrives disguised as a woman is ready to give him a stern reception. Meanwhile the lady's brother, who is a model of Irish good sense, reads her a lecture upon her folly and succeeds in reducing her to tears and wholesome repentance. The Count,

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who has now walked into the trap so cunningly laid for him, is exposed to the gaze and piquant remarks of the company assembled in the drawing-room, and is then forced to enter a trunk, in which he is carried to a fashionable ball to become the object of still greater ridicule. The Englishman in the play describes the Irish as 'a damn'd honest, tory-rory, rantum-scantum, daring, singing, laughing, boozing, jolly, friendly, fighting, hospitable people,' whom he professes to like mightily. This draws from the lady's brother the sarcastic reply that 'the people of Ireland' are much obliged to him for his 'helter-skelter, rantum-scantum portrait of them.' The hero of the piece is the old man, who has spent his life in draining bogs, planting trees, and giving employment to his tenants—a more profitable way of passing one's time, one is given to understand, than in gadding about after London joys, which only ends in producing domestic jars by unsettling the character.¹

A piece such as this of Macklin, without depth or probability, would scarcely have appealed to the reader of this book, but he will agree that it would have been hard to resist inspecting the cast, which included the great Macklin himself and the beautiful Mrs. Dancer. Some of the plays of the period may have been tedious and dull, but this was undoubtedly the age of great acting.² Players threw great energy into their art, their aim being, as Goldsmith said, to be 'high in a part' or to 'make a great deal of the character'. It has often been observed that an actor's fame dies with him.³

¹ A copy of this play by Charles Macklin, which was published in Dublin in 1783, is in the National Library, Dublin. There is no copy in the British Museum.

For some remarks on *The True-born Irishman* see G. C. Duggan's *The Stage Irishman: a History of the Irish Play and Stage Characters from the Earliest Times* (1937).

² Goldsmith observed in one of his critical Essays 'No matter what the play may be, it is the actor that draws the audience'.

³ The reader may be reminded of the verses of Sheridan:

*'The Actor only shrinks from Time's onward,
Feeble tradition is his memory's guard;
By whose faint breath his merits must abide,
Unvouched by proof, to substance unallied.'*

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When Hitchcock, the prompter at Smock Alley, tells us that Barry 'principally excelled' in the 'softer expressions of the tender and feeling emotions', while Mossop rose 'beyond idea' in the 'great and terrible', we know what he means, but we feel nothing in particular. The impressions that they made are best realized at this distance in time as we look at the whole picture—the crowds that fought fiercely for admission at the doors, the excessive noise caused by coaches and chairmen in the streets as they carried off their patrons from the theatre, the laughter and applause of audiences who were easily melted to tears or startled into rising from their seats in rows as they experienced new and strange emotions. In Walker's *Hibernian Magazine* there is a description by one who was present, of Mrs. Siddons' acting in her great great tragic part of Isabella in *The Fatal Marriage* at Smock Alley in the summer of 1781—her first appearance in Dublin:

'The forlorn Isabella [says the writer] pleaded for our esteem, our love, and our compassion with all the power that grace and dignity and delicacy of manners can bestow upon the distresses of a beautiful woman, who utters them in the voice, and with the action of Nature itself. . . . Her looks told the story for the poet—and the language of inquietude and fatigue was spoken with a simplicity, a nicety, a continence, which we should in vain attempt to render palatable to those (if there were any so void of taste) who did not feel it at the time. The remainder of the piece was really terrible—in so much that in the last scene while one of those lengthened tones of anguish was drawing out, which we never could at any time resist, there arose at once, from all sides of the house, a wailing and crying, in the same note, that almost drowned the voice of Mrs. Siddons.'

This 'wailing and crying' takes us into the theatre.¹

There were some features peculiar to, or specially emphasized in, the Irish theatre which are mentioned by O'Keeffe

¹ There is a would-be humorous account of Mrs. Siddons' acting in Dublin by John Edwin, the actor, in *Edwin's Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1788).

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and others. There was no half-price for admission,¹ as in London, so that people did not come into the house in the middle of a play and damn it by hissing without having seen the whole performance. In Dublin as a rule no women sat in the pit, nor did anyone ever take a place in the boxes except in full dress. 'The ladies and gentlemen in the boxes always went dressed out nearly as for Court,' writes Barrington; 'the strictest etiquette and decorum were preserved in that circle.' When the hero died not only was the conventional carpet laid out for him to expire on, but the curtain was often brought down by applause before the end of the performance. The audience seem cheerfully to have sacrificed the concluding lines of a piece in order to pay this compliment to a popular favourite.

Barrington remarks that the galleries, besides being very noisy, were often very 'droll', and many are the stories told of the humour of 'the gods'—especially by English visitors. Macready, who frequently played in Dublin, wrote as follows in his *Reminiscences*:

'I remember on one occasion acting the character of Pierre in *Venice Preserved*. My friend Jaffier displayed a rotundity of person that might have agreed with the simile to which he likened himself of 'a full ear of corn', but certainly showed no appearance of being 'withered in the ripening'. As if in accordance with this obesity, his delivery was drawling, and his deportment heavy. In the scene prepared for the execution of Pierre, after he had struck me and himself with his dagger, (and gasping out the few spirited words of the defiant conspirator, I had closed my part with the cordial plaudits of the audience), a long and rather drowsy dying speech of my poor friend Jaffier was "dragging

¹ According to Lewis' *Dublin Guide* (1787), the prices of admission to Smock Alley Theatre were as follows: five English shillings for a seat in the boxes; three shillings for the Pit; the Gallery two shillings; the Upper Gallery, one shilling. The Irish theatre was at first designed to amuse the Vice-Regal Court, and then the Anglo-Irish nobility and gentry who were its chief supporters. With the growth of industry and trade the traders and merchants became increasingly interested and the poorer classes who had necessarily no drama of their own were keen supporters of the pit and galleries.

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its slow length along", when one of the gallery, in a tone of great impatience, called out very loudly: "*Ah now, die at once!*"; to which another from the other side immediately replied: "Be quiet, you blackguard,"—then turned with a patronizing tone to the lingering Jaffier—"Take your time!"

Most actors and actresses enjoyed playing before Irish audiences. Mrs. Siddons was much piqued while acting in Edinburgh by the prudent Scottish habit of reserving applause to the end of the performance, but she refers with gratitude in her letters to her receptions by 'the warm-hearted Irish'. To quote Macready again:

'The value of the principle that I had lain down as a primary duty in my art, namely *always be in earnest*, was enforced upon me still more strongly by my experience before a Dublin audience. Their attention arrested, and their feelings once excited, the actor enjoyed in their glowing sympathy the full triumph of his art. The national character might be read with tolerable correctness in their theatre. Keenly sensitive to the commanding truth of the poet's or player's passion, they would as often find recourse in their own humour from their dullness or inefficiency. It would not infrequently happen that the humour of the gallery would prove the ruler of the hour, disturbing the more sedate of the spectators and utterly discomposing the player; until, checked by perhaps some energetic declamation, or sobered by some touch of nature, they would surrender themselves to the potent influence of the scene, and beneath its charm no assembly could watch more intently, with more discriminating taste, or more lavish applause, the "dream of passion passing before them".'

The people of Dublin in the eighteenth century were certainly fond of the theatre. Croker states in his *Familiar Epistles*, published in 1804, that the chief playhouse then yielded the manager £5,000 a year, and this is probably an underestimate. Despite all difficulties, receipts had generally taken an upward curve. Tate Wilkinson tells us that at Dublin in 1757 £150 was 'a great house indeed', while in 1763 if £180 came in as gate-money this was judged 'a

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wonder'. He goes on to say, however, that under Daly's management in Crow Street, when the theatre was enlarged, £324 in receipts was a usual taking, and that more could actually have been made but that hundreds had to be turned from the doors from lack of seating accommodation.

Daly's transference of his interests in the Dublin theatres to Frederick Jones in 1797 marks the end of an epoch. The great Rebellion broke out the next year, and martial law was proclaimed. People might not appear in the streets of the capital after 8 p.m., and the theatres were temporarily closed. After the Union most things were changed, and a blight fell upon Dublin society. The national Parliament was gone, and with it most of the people of fashion who had been the chief patrons of the theatre. Smock Alley had disappeared,¹ but Crow Street lingered on till 1820.² Jones soon encountered the old difficulties. He had engaged Italian artists to decorate his theatre, and spent a good deal of money on dress and scenery. But a riot took place in 1814 because he had substituted one play for another against the wishes of the populace, and in 1819 there was another in which most of the theatre property was destroyed. In the summer of 1820 Henry Harris, of Covent Garden, who had taken over Crow Street from Jones, fitted up a temporary theatre in the Round Room of the Rotunda, and here Macready and other English actors appeared. In the autumn, however, he built a new playhouse in Hawkins Street which for comfort and convenience was a great improvement on its predecessors. When George IV came to Dublin in 1821³ he visited this theatre in state. On this great occasion the strug-

¹ Smock Alley, which ceased to be used as a theatre after 1788, was converted into a workhouse in 1790. It was pulled down in 1815, and the Church of SS. Michael and John erected on the site. The stone stairs of the old pit can still be found in the vaults.

² After 1820 Crow Street Theatre lay derelict for a time. Part of the site was purchased in 1836 by the Company of the Apothecaries Hall, and sold by them in 1852 to the Catholic University for the use of their Medical School.

³ There is an account of the visit of George IV to Dublin in 1821 in J. W. Croker's *Correspondence and Diaries* (1884), Vol. I, pp. 198-207. See also the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. xxxvii (1907), pp. 42-3. No English King had visited Ireland since William III.

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gle for admission was so severe that hats, coats, gloves, and even skirts were all trampled under foot.

In the ten years that elapsed between 1820 and 1830 the chief stars appearing in Dublin were Macready, Edmund Kean and the Kembles. Fanny Kemble had already made her amazing *début* as Juliet in London when she appeared with her father to play at Hawkins Street in the summer of 1830. In a letter to a friend she records her first Dublin experience as follows: 'My reception on Monday was quite overpowering, and I was escorted back to the hotel after the play by a body guard of about 200 men shouting and hurrahing like mad.' Once arrived at her lodging this crowd, which was formed, to her surprise, of 'people of perfectly respectable appearance', divided on each side to let her pass, several of them dropping on their knees to look under her bonnet as she ran laughing with her head down from the carriage to the house. 'I was greatly confused and a little frightened,' she says, 'as well as amused and gratified by their cordial demonstration.' Of her second night of acting at the theatre she writes: 'As we were leaving the theatre by the private entrance, we found the carriage surrounded by a crowd eagerly waiting for our coming out. As soon as my father appeared there was a shout—'three cheers for Mistor Char-les'—then 'three cheers for Miss Fanny!' 'Bedad, she looks well by gaslight,' exclaimed one of my admirers. 'Och and bedad she looks well by daylight too!' retorted another, though what his opportunity for forming that flattering opinion of the genuineness of my good looks had been, I cannot imagine. What further remarks passed upon us, I do not know, as we drove away laughing, and left our friends still vociferously cheering.'

Edmund Kean had a most successful season in Dublin in 1815, when he acted Shylock, Richard III, Hamlet, Othello, and Macbeth. 'To see Kean act,' wrote Coleridge, 'is like reading Shakespeare by flashes of lightning.' The Dublin playgoers of the time would have agreed, for his biographer records that 'thundering applause, compliments of all sorts, and the sum of £1,370' rewarded this actor's twelve nights' exertions. On this occasion Grattan invited Kean to his house, and he received similar attentions from others. In the sum-

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mer of 1829 he was in Dublin again. But he cannot have been so successful as on his earlier visit, for he was then on the down grade, drinking heavily and deeply in debt. The theatre also seems to have fallen into low water, for on the night before one of his performances Kean had to threaten the manager that if his share of previous profits was not immediately paid he would at once drive to Kingstown and embark for England as soon as possible.

Under the Union Dublin maintained her connexion with the English stage, but suffered in common with other provincial centres from the growing concentration of theatrical talent in London. The rise of a national drama towards the end of the nineteenth century added enormously to the interest of the theatre, but there were fewer playhouses than there had been, and audiences, though often as noisy, were less appreciative. The technique of plays and acting has naturally advanced with the times, but in the eighteenth century with greater simplicity went greater gusto—more energy in the players, more enjoyment in the audience.

CHAPTER VII

Industry and Commerce

The Merchants, Citizens and Manufacturers in Dublin are very numerous, and many of them rich and in great credit, perfectly well understanding every branch of Trade: of which their Linnen, Woollen, Silken and Hair-manufactured goods are specimens.

EDWARD LLOYD ('Citizen and Silk-thrower of London who liv'd near twenty years in Ireland and is lately come from Dublin'),

A Description of the City of Dublin (London, 1732)

The extraordinary facilities of communication with the British markets have been a principal cause that the mercantile classes have dwindled away in so remarkable a degree; there is no longer any scope in Dublin for extensive transactions, or the employment of large capitals.

*Evidence given by ROBERT ROE, Director of the Bank of Ireland,
before the Select Committee on the State of the
Poor in Ireland* (1830)

The importance of Dublin in the eighteenth century undoubtedly arose from the fact that it was the seat of government. Most of the Irish gentry and nobility built and inhabited their town houses in order to attend Parliament. Incidentally they enjoyed each other's society and established a social life. Dublin was never, properly speaking, an industrial town, but she had some industries of consequence, and by the end of the period her trade had developed, and she had become an important port.

The chief industrial wealth of Dublin came from the woollen manufacture. This had been established by English and Huguenot weavers, who had settled there with their families on account both of the cheapness of labour and of the excellent quality of Irish wool. In 1698 the manufacture is said to have given employment to as many as 12,000 Protestant families, but when export was forbidden by the

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Government trade naturally fell off and many weavers who had formerly been prosperous were reduced to poverty.

In 1773 the Dublin Society took the manufacture in hand and encouraged the home consumption of cloth by the establishment of a Woollen Warehouse in Castle Street; six years later the Act was repealed which prohibited the exportation of Irish woollen manufactures and the trade with the Colonies was thrown open. From this time up to the Union the industry had many ups and downs, but in 1792, according to Warburton, there were sixty master-clothiers and 400 broad looms in the Liberties employing 5,000 persons, as well as 100 narrow looms producing cashmeres, cassinettes, and beaver druggets.

A fair amount of this cloth was sent to the Colonies, but most of it was used for home consumption only. Owing to the English restrictions, there were fewer skilled weavers than there had been in the flourishing period at the end of the seventeenth century. The effect of this was that a coarser cloth was now manufactured. As the gentry naturally preferred the finer and more highly finished stuffs that were made in England, the patronage of the Irish trade fell chiefly into the hands of the poorer classes. Lord Sheffield wrote in his *Observations on the Manufactures, Trade, and Present State of Ireland* (1785):

‘The amount of the consumption of woollens in Ireland we cannot know, but it is very great; and perhaps, no country whatever, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, consumes so much. The lower ranks are covered with the clumsiest woollen drapery, and although the material may not be fine, there is abundance of it. Besides coat and waistcoat, the lower classes wear a great coat, both summer and winter, if it can possibly be got. Not only their clothing but their stockings seem to contain a double quantity of wool, and the women among the peasantry seem to depend on other charms than elegance and ornament: they also wear the clumsiest woollens. There is no intention of insinuating that they always wear stockings, but that which covers their persons, and their petticoats, and also their cloke, if they have one, contains much wool, and all of the most gloomy colours;

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linen or cotton gowns are seldom to be seen among the common peasantry of Ireland.'

The woollen 'manufacturers' inhabited the Coombe, Pimlico, and what was afterwards named Weavers' Square, with its high gabled roofs and attics; the silk-weavers lived mainly in the Spitalfields, so called after a similar district in London.

Silk-weaving in Dublin was also originated by Huguenots, who had settled there about 1682, and was soon in a flourishing condition, for we learn from evidence submitted to the Irish House of Commons in 1730 that 800 looms were then working, employing 3,000 persons. These numbers did not include those who made 'tabinet', or poplin, a mixture of silk and wool for which Dublin was to become famous.

The industry, owing to foreign competition, like that of woollen cloth, had its ups and downs. There were heavy duties on French silks, but these were skilfully smuggled in large quantities from France, and English merchants, with their monopoly of raw silk from the East Indies, were in a specially favourable position to compete with the Irish manufacturers. By 1763, indeed, the number of looms in Dublin was so much reduced that the Irish Parliament (in response to a petition received from the Corporation of Weavers) granted £8,000 to the Dublin Society to encourage the industry. As a result a Silk 'Warehouse' was established in Parliament Street with the idea of minimizing profits to middlemen (mercers and drapers) and directly benefiting the silk manufacturers, and the Society offered premiums on the sale of all Irish silks. This hall was formally opened in 1765, when the chief members of the nobility and gentry lent their patronage, and ladies of fashion made extensive purchases.

As the result of these efforts the industry almost immediately revived, and soon afterwards 3,000 looms were at work in Dublin, employing 11,000 persons. The force of foreign competition, however, again made itself felt, and the Silk Warehouse had to be closed in 1786. By 1791 another revival had set in, and 1,200 looms were again in use, producing velvets, satins, persians, tabinets, and other kindred materials. 'Many of the silk manufactures of Ireland are

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excellent,' wrote Lord Sheffield, 'her white damasks and her lutestrings are very good; her silk pocket handkerchiefs are, at least, as good as any; her mixtures of silk are beautiful; her colours excel those of England, her tabinets and poplins are well known and admired everywhere.'

The Rebellion of 1798, which led to a generally disturbed state in the country, and the Napoleonic wars, which brought about a shortage of raw material and drainage of workmen to serve in the Army and Navy, again gave the silk manufacture of Dublin a setback, and immediately before the Union the industry was in a state of decline. The French Revolution had led to changes in fashion (silk stockings, for instance, were no longer worn by gentlemen), and both rich and poor, as in England, had developed a taste for cottons.

For a time it looked as if there might be a flourishing cotton industry in Ireland. Under the old commercial restrictions she could not import raw cotton from the Colonies, nor, owing to high duties, compete with English cloth, but when the restrictions were removed in 1779 a decided stimulus was given to the Irish manufacture. The Dublin Parliament laid duties on all imported cottons, and gave large grants to private individuals to establish factories. English weavers were encouraged, moreover, to settle in the Liberties.

The Dublin Society made grants for the purchase of new machinery and gave bounties on the sale of manufactured goods. Several factories were established in the neighbourhood of the capital, and one in Cork Street—in the city itself. About 1786 there are said to have been at least 1,600 cotton-weavers employed in Dublin. By the end of the French wars, although the cotton manufacture was strongly established in the North, which enjoyed the double advantage of sufficient capital to buy machinery and the proximity of cheap coal from Lancashire, it must be said to have failed, despite all the efforts that had been made to encourage it, in the South.¹

¹ This failure was due partly to lack of industrial ability and partly to lack of capital and raw materials. There is an interesting account of a cotton factory founded at Prosperous in Co. Kildare in 1780 by Robert Brooke (an Englishman who had had a distinguished career in the service of the East India Company, and subsequently became Governor of St. Helena) in the *Irish House of Commons Journal*, vol. xii. Appendix ccxiv-ccxvii. This enterprise, in

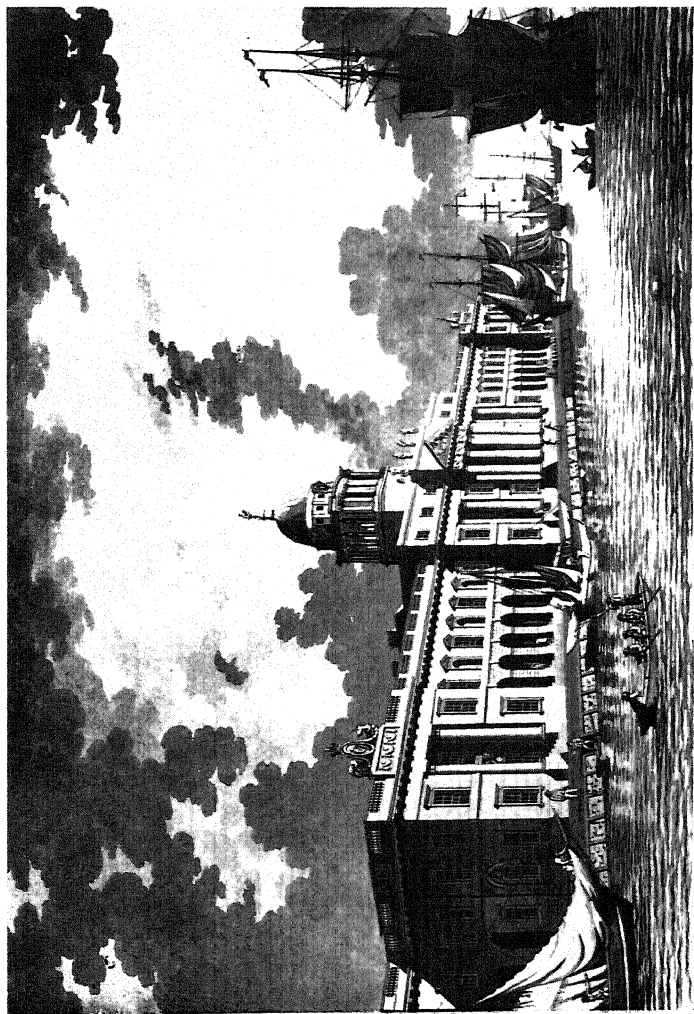
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By 1816 there were still 300 looms working in Dublin, but these could make little headway against the new English power looms, and the industry, unable to withstand the flood of English competition, rapidly declined. Even in the North the cotton trade was not destined to flourish for long, for spinning by machinery was introduced into the linen industry (which had temporarily fallen behind) and the linen trade soon regained its former position and dominated the market.

Linen was the most important of Irish manufactures in the eighteenth century.¹ It was free from the restrictions placed by the English Government on other Irish industries, and it received extensive grants from the Irish Parliament—by way of compensation, no doubt, for the suppression of the woollen trade. In 1711 a Linen Board was appointed, composed, according to its own description of itself, of 'people of the highest rank in both Houses of Parliament'. This Board was entrusted with the disposal of Parliamentary grants. It established spinning schools, bought flax, sent out inspectors, gave prizes for weaving, and did everything it could to encourage the trade. Ireland was specially suited both by climate and soil for the industry, and the manufacturers did a good business with America. In 1710, 1,688,574 yards of linen cloth were exported, and this figure had risen to 18,836,042 in 1779. The progress of the trade was particularly rapid during the period of Grattan's Parliament, when it is said to have actually trebled. By the time of the Union the number of yards of linen cloth annually exported from Ireland was 35,903,292. During the greater part of the eighteenth century the manufacture of linen was spread all over the country, but, like the cotton industry, it never took root in the South, partly because of the pernicious land system under which the peasants lacked security of tenure, and partly because Southern landlords, although genuinely anxious for industrial development, did not seem to know the right way to set about it.

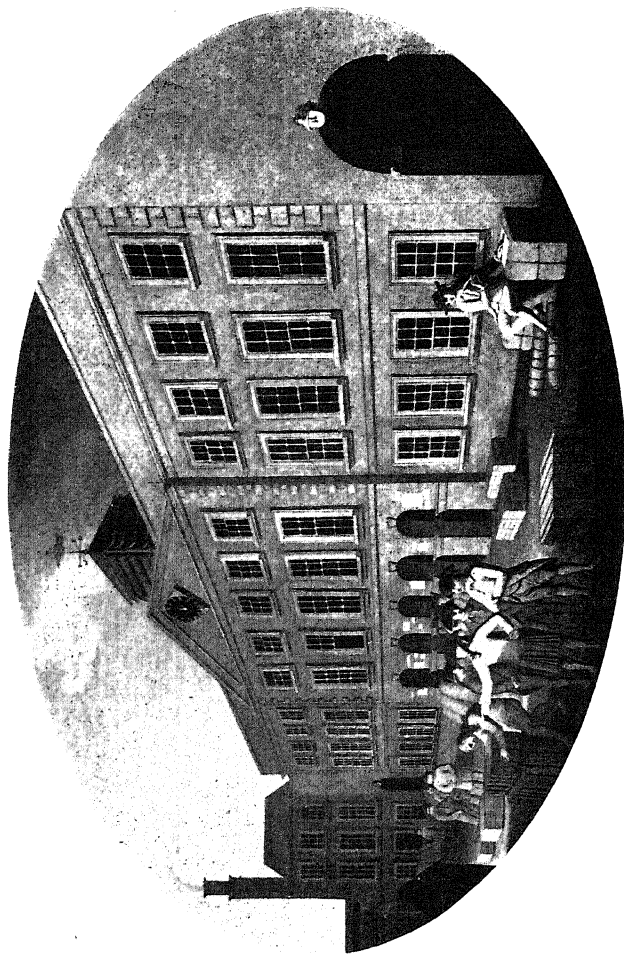
Before the localization of the industry in the North, which which some 7,000 persons were employed, failed in 1787. The works were burned by the rebels in 1798.

¹ See Conrad Gill's *The Rise of the Irish Linen Industry* (1925).



THE CUSTOM HOUSE, DUBLIN

From James Malton's *Picturesque and Descriptive View of the City of Dublin* (1792-99)



THE LINEN HALL, DUBLIN
From an engraving by William Hincks (1791)

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took place towards the end of the century, Dublin was the great distributing centre for the linen trade. The cloth was collected by 'drapers' at Ulster markets and fairs, and taken down by road (towards the end of the century by canal) to the Irish capital. Here it was sold to 'factors' (wholesale merchants) and buyers from England, who either disposed of it in their own country or re-exported it abroad. To facilitate the sale of cloth a Linen Hall was erected in Dublin in 1728.¹ This was modelled on Blackwell Hall, the great market of the drapers in London, and was built by means of a grant from the Irish Parliament. Here drapers and factors gathered to arrange sales; here yarn and cloth were stored; and here the Trustees of the Linen Board met weekly to supervise the trade.

The Hall (situated at the north end of Capel Street) was so much in request in the latter half of the century that it was enlarged several times. In its final form it was three storeys high, and contained 550 rooms. There was a board-room, a coffee-room, and houses for members of the staff. The principal front of the building, which was of brick, was ornamented by a clock and cupola. In the centre was a large courtyard surrounded by an arcade, and above this, on the two upper floors, there were open galleries. Up to 1816 the volume of trade passing through the Hall amounted to three-eighths of the total export from Ireland, but Belfast was rapidly developing as a port, and had begun to do a direct trade with England. The trade of Dublin gradually fell off, and the Linen Hall, though retained for some years as a warehouse, ceased definitely to be used as a market in 1828. 'I need not say', Thackeray remarks in his *Irish Sketch Book* (1843), 'how we went to see the Linen Hall of Dublin—that huge, useless, lonely, decayed place, in the vast windy solitudes of which stands the simpering statue of George IV, pointing to some bales of shirting, over which he is supposed to extend his august protection.' The Linen Hall, which must have been an imposing building, covering as it did (together with its courtyards) some four acres in all, was to have a yet more melancholy fate. For many years it was used as a

¹ There is a description of the Dublin Linen Hall in the *Hibernian Magazine* for September 1777.

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barracks for troops, and was finally burned in the Rising of 1916.

The excessive drinking among the poor, which formed such a distressing feature of eighteenth-century Dublin, has already been spoken of. This presupposes the existence of brewing and distilling industries. In the earlier part of the century the duty placed upon Irish beer imported into England was so high that it amounted almost to a prohibition. Another factor that hampered the development of this industry was the large consumption of spirits among the people. In 1791 Grattan moved a resolution that 'the drinking of spirits had become a great national evil', and the Irish Parliament passed a measure to encourage brewing by the reduction of the excise duties. In 1818 there were thirty-five breweries in Dublin, of which Guinness's Brewery, founded about the middle of the eighteenth century, was chief. For many years the trade was almost entirely local, and not until the Free Trade system was fully developed did the export of porter, for which Dublin subsequently became famous, begin.

Between 1780 and 1792 there was a great increase in distilling, which the Government then tried to discourage by raising the excise on spirits, but no measures to restrict the consumption of spirits in Dublin under the Georges were very successful, partly owing to the half-hearted measures taken by a Government anxious to maintain its revenues and partly to the widespread existence of illicit stills. By 1818 there were nine distilleries in Dublin, and an export trade was not long in developing.

Most of the Irish glass belonging to this period which is in existence is popularly attributed to the glass-house at Waterford, but, as a matter of fact, a good deal of it must have been made in Dublin, where there were several notable 'factories', all of which turned out highly finished work.

'At the Round Glass-house in Mary's Lane, Dublin, are making all sorts of the newest fashion drinking glasses; water bottles; decanters; jugs; water glasses with saucers plain and moulded; all sorts of jelly glasses; sillybub glasses; sweetmeat ditto for desserts; salvers; orange glasses; covers

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for torts; bells and shades; hall lanterns for one to four candles; barrel lanterns; globe lamps, etc., all mounted with brass after the newest fashions from London.¹

This short advertisement is selected from the *Dublin Journal* of 9th December 1746. Others of a similar nature might be quoted from contemporary newspapers giving longer lists and a greater variety.

In 1746, the export of Irish glass having been prohibited, a set-back was given to the industry for many years, but after 1780, when the restrictions were removed, fresh stimulus was given to the trade, and large quantities of Irish glass were produced and exported to the West Indies, Spain, Portugal, Madeira, and America. 'The Glass manufactory is to be reckoned among the manufactures which Ireland has cultivated with most success,' wrote Wallace in his *Essay on the Manufactures of Ireland*, published in 1798; 'within a few years we are able not only to supply our own consumption but to export very considerable quantities to America and elsewhere. . . . The houses in this city [of Dublin] which are in the American trade have generally orders from New York sufficient to occupy them entirely for two years.' In 1810 the exports of glass from Ireland consisted of 377,190 drinking glasses, all from Dublin, 15,236 dozens of bottles, and other glassware valued at £16,124.

The patterns on Irish and English cut glass of the period, as well as the shapes of the various objects produced in both countries, were very similar. According to the late Mr. M. S. D. Westropp, of the National Museum of Ireland, a well-known authority on the subject, this may be accounted for by the fact that large numbers of the workmen employed in Irish glass-houses were Englishmen. 'Both Cork and Waterford', he writes, 'started with complete sets of English glass-makers, and the proprietors of several of the Dublin

¹ This glass-house was originally established about 1690 by a Captain Philip Roche, one of the officers of James II's army in Ireland, who had studied glass-making on the Continent. It is surmised that it was situated on a 'piece of ground bordering on Mary's Lane, between George's Hill and Bradogue Lane (now Halston Street).' (M. S. D. Westropp, *General Guide to the Art Collections in the National Museum of Science and Art, Dublin*, Part IX, 'Glass' (1920) p. 19.) See also by the same author *Irish glass* published in 1920.

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glass-houses were Englishmen.' It was through these English immigrants, according to the same authority, that English styles in form, cutting, and design were introduced from England to Ireland, though as time went on and the Irish workmen employed became experienced in the trade new patterns probably were thought out and put into execution.

Despite the large quantities of glass made in Ireland in the eighteenth century, much English glass was imported into the country throughout the same period. Mr. Westropp therefore surmised that a good deal of the glass that has been found in Ireland in recent times, and supposed to have been made there, is in reality of English origin. The same writer suggested that, in view of the fact that so much glass was exported from Ireland during the Georgian period to the West Indies and the United States, both these countries should form happy hunting-grounds for the modern collector in search of the genuine Irish article.

Pottery and porcelain were also made in Dublin at this time. In one of her letters Mrs. Delany speaks of purchasing 'a set of earthenware and baskets' for the Duchess of Portland at 'the World's End' (near Mabbot Street), Dublin, in 1750; and handsome specimens of Irish work of the period have made their way into private collections and museums. In his guide to the pottery and porcelain in the National Museum, Dublin, Mr. Westropp gives illustrations of two pieces of Dublin delft that are in the possession of Mr. S. G. Stopford Sackville, of Drayton House, Northamptonshire. 'Mr. Sackville possesses six pieces,' he writes, 'three bowls and three plates, all of a fine tin-glazed ware, well-painted with landscapes in blue, and each marked underneath with a large harp and crown and the word "Dublin" also in blue.' 'These pieces', he adds, '—probably remains of a set—are stated to have been presented either to the Lord-Lieutenant (the Duke of Dorset) or to Lord George Sackville, about 1753; and it is almost certain that they were made at Delamain's factory' (in Dublin). Before the end of the eighteenth century the making of fine pottery had ceased in Dublin, and we find Lord Sheffield writing in 1785 that 'at present Ireland has no very considerable pottery works, except coarse kinds'.

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Between 1694 and 1700 the yearly average amount of plate assayed in Dublin was 26,000 ounces; and for the years 1787 and 1788 it was between 80,000 and 90,000 ounces; while by 1835 the amount had fallen to 6,000 ounces. These figures speak for themselves. In Mr. C. J. Jackson's *History of English Plate* the reader will find illustrations of bowls, candlesticks, castors, coffee-pots, spoons, tankards, and so on, made in Ireland during the Georgian period, the specimens being now mainly in the possession of private persons. Silver manufactured in Ireland at this time seems generally to have followed the vogue in England, with the exception of the Dish-Rings (stands for circular bowls popularly known as 'Potato Rings'),¹ and the harp-handled cups, fine specimens of which may be seen in the Dublin Museum. In looking over the lists of the Masters and Wardens of the Dublin Goldsmiths' Company compiled by Mr. Jackson (and given in his book on *The English Goldsmiths and their Marks*) from the Company's journals, directories, and other sources, it will be noticed that most of the names are of English origin, though some of these also are Huguenot. It was one of the rules of this guild that 'no master-goldsmith was to deliver any gold or silver to be wrought below the English standard'.

Before the Union there were several cabinet-makers in Dublin who turned out creditable work in the varying styles of the time. In the first quarter of the eighteenth century, when there was comparatively little contact with London, the Irish craftsmen often adapted earlier English models, to which they added ornamental designs of their own—the grotesque masks, lions' heads, scallop-shells, claw and ball feet, etc., which are associated with what is popularly known as 'Irish Chippendale'—but from the second half of the century the designs became standardized, as the Irish cabinet-makers were influenced by the trade catalogues of well-known English cabinet-makers, which then began to make their appearance.² Most of the furniture made in Ire-

¹ These stands were used to prevent the hot bowl from injuring the polished mahogany table. The Sheffield plated copies were mostly made in England.

² Thomas Chippendale (d. 1779) published *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director* in 1754. See John Gloag, *British Furniture Makers* (1945).

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land in the course of the eighteenth century was of Spanish mahogany, but satin-wood and painted beech also became very popular towards the end of the period.

Another industry that flourished in Dublin before the Union was that of coach-building. At the end of the century, indeed, Dublin contained more than forty separate coach 'factories'. A proof of the flourishing state of the industry was the Lord Mayor's state coach, a beautiful specimen of artistic manufacture. This elegant equipage, drawn by six black horses, made its appearance for the first time on the anniversary of King William's birthday (November 4th) in 1791, and is described by a writer in the *Hibernian Magazine* as follows:

'The body of the City State Carriage which has four caryatids at the angles, is richly gilt, the panels exhibiting emblematical paintings of very bold and masterly execution. From the roof hang festoons of flowers beautifully grouped, which produce a most pleasing and striking effect over the glasses of the sides and back. Four large figures: emblems of Plenty, Justice, etc., decorate the front and rear, and the roof, which is terminated by two smaller sculptures representing Liberty and Wisdom, is surmounted by various apposite and elegant civic ornaments.'

On the same day the Lord Chancellor joined the procession in a magnificently painted and ornamented coach, manufactured in London, which, according to Faulkner's *Journal*, had cost the enormous sum of £7,000. But Lord Clare's equipage was considered inferior to the Dublin product by the patriotic writer in the *Hibernian Magazine*, who takes pleasure in referring to 'the superior elegance of Irish workmanship'.

Something has already been said of the vogue for music in eighteenth-century Dublin; it is not surprising therefore to learn that several notable musical instrument makers flourished there during the period. Shortly before the Union there were in fact eight harpsichord and piano manufacturers, besides several organ-builders—a considerable number for the size of the town. The most famous of these was the German

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Ferdinand Weber,¹ who had studied under Handel, a noted organ-builder of Meissen, and carried on his art as harpsichord maker and organ-builder in Werburgh Street, Dublin, from 1739 to 1783. Weber made harpsichords for many distinguished people—the Lord-Lieutenant (the Earl of Buckinghamshire), the Earl of Ely, the Earl of Glandore, Lady Fingall, Lady Kingsborough, Lord Mornington, and many others. He was also famous for his organs, one of which he built for Christ Church, Cork. In 1761 a recital was given on this organ in Dublin, when, according to Faulkner's *Journal*, the 'virtuosi' agreed that it was 'the most compleat instrument of the kind that has ever been made in this Kingdom'. About 1775 the pianoforte began to displace the spinet or harpsichord. Weber also made pianos, one of which was purchased by John Philpot Curran for his daughter Sarah, the *fiancée* of the ill-fated Robert Emmet. Weber's account-book was published by Mr. Grattan Flood in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* in 1914. This gives details of his business (selling, hiring, and tuning), and is interesting as throwing a side-light on the social life of the times. Weber died in 1784, when his business was carried on in Dublin by his Irish apprentice, William Southwell.

Nothing illustrates the taste of the Irish gentry of the period better than the way in which they bound their books. In a rare little volume by Sir Edward Sullivan, entitled *Decorative Bookbinding in Ireland*, published by 'Ye Sette of Odd Volumes Society' in *Opuscula* 1914, he remarks: 'The work that was done in Dublin all through the eighteenth century was in no way inferior in the matter of artistic feeling design and general workmanship to the very best work that was at any time produced in England.' The manuscript folio volumes of the Irish Lords' and Commons' Journals extending from 1613 up to the Union (Sir Edward Sullivan gives some illustrations of the magnificent bindings of the later volumes in his book), were unfortunately destroyed during recent troubles in Ireland. But interesting specimens of Irish eighteenth-century binding may be inspected at the British

¹ For Ferdinand Weber, harpsichord maker, see *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vols. xxxix, xliii, xlv, pp. 139, 144, 338.

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Museum and at South Kensington, as well as in the National Library of Ireland in Dublin. Here the gem of the collection is the Book of Common Prayer which was printed by Grierson, the King's Printer, in Dublin in 1750. The volume is magnificently bound in rich red morocco with white and black inlays and gold tooling. This beautiful binding may be compared to its immeasurable advantage with the crude and gaudy specimens produced in the Irish capital about 1830. The art of bookbinding in Ireland had certainly declined since the Union.¹

Among minor industries carried on in Dublin in the eighteenth century was the leather industry, controlled by the Guilds of Tanners, Curriers, Glovers, Shoemakers, and Saddlers. This flourished during the Napoleonic wars, when there was a good demand for harness and saddlery for the English army on the Continent. Shipbuilding was also carried on in Dublin, though not on a very large scale. A paper industry flourished under Grattan's Parliament. And in the earlier part of the century there was a considerable manufacture of tapestry and carpets. Gilbert speaks of lesser industries—a manufacture of 'wicker baskets' in Fishamble Street, for example.

'We have in Dublin, superfine, refine, and middling Cloathes, Serges, Druggets, Drabs, Ratteens, narrow Goods of all Sorts, Callimincoes, Everlastings, German-Serges, Stuffs, Camblets, Poplins, etc., all very well finished, and some to the utmost Nicety; as are also Velvets, plain and flowered; Hair and worsted Shags; Silks of different Kinds and Patterns; Silk Handkerchiefs and Ribbands. It was with real Satisfaction that I have lately seen some Pieces of superfine Cloth, of Home-manufacture, equal to any imported; and some very beautiful and elegantly-fancied Pieces of Silk: because, if this laudable Spirit of excelling should grow more popular, and meet with suitable Protection and Encouragement from our Nobility and Gentry, we shall, in a few Years, have scarce any Occasion of deriving these costly Commodities from other Countries, to the manifest Advantage of our

¹ See *Irish Bookbinding 1600-1800* by Maurice Craig (1954). (Beautifully illustrated).

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own. Gold and Silver Lace and Fringe, fine Hats, milinary [millinery] Articles, Saddlers' Goods, Cloaks, Watches, Cutlery-Wares, Fire-Arms, Coaches, Post-Chaises, Chariots, etc., are extremely well and neatly finished in Dublin; and it is certain our Artizans and Tradesmen in general, execute the Business of their respective Trades and Occupations, with as much Strength, Fashion and Dispatch, are as moderate in their Prices, and are as decent, or rather more so, in their Manner of dealing, than those of most other Cities. It is in fact, severe, that our best Manufacturers, in order to dispose reasonably of their Goods, are frequently constrained to pass them as the Produce of other Countries; it being often clear, that the Difference in the Value of our Manufactures and the best imported, is solely nominal.'

Thus wrote the anonymous author of the *Essay on the Antient and Modern State of Ireland*, published in Dublin in 1759.¹ He would have had a great deal less cause to complain of the neglect of Irish industries had he written not in the middle but towards the end of the century, when the Volunteer movement had stirred up a patriotic determination on the part of all classes to encourage home manufactures.

The trades and industries of Dublin throughout the Georgian period were organized in guilds. These nominally controlled the conditions of work, maintained the quality of the goods, and exercised a strict monopoly over the trade. Some of these guilds, such as those of the Bakers, the Glovers and Skinners, the Shoemakers or Cordwainers, the Cooks and Vintners, and the Smiths (which included glaziers, pewterers, braziers, founders, tinplate-workers, and wire-drawers), dated from the fifteenth century. Other guilds—those of the Butchers; the Carpenters, Millers, Masons, and Tilers; the Tallow-chandlers, Soap-boilers, and Wax-light Makers; as well as that of the Goldsmiths, Watchmakers, and Clockmakers—received their charters in Tudor times. A still larger number of Dublin guilds originated as late as the seventeenth century, such as the Coopers; the Felt-

¹ This pamphlet is said to have been written by Henry Brooke (1703-83), author of *The Farmer's Letters to the Protestants of Ireland*, etc.

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makers; the Cutlers, Painter-stainers, and Stationers; the Bricklayers and Plasterers; the Hosiers and Knitters; the Curriers; and the Brewers and Maltsters.

One of the most powerful of the guilds was that of the Weavers, which received its first charter in 1446. This corporation, which was governed by a Master and two Wardens, was granted the regulation of the art of weaving, and was empowered to examine all trespasses and offences committed by weavers and their servants and apprentices, adjudicate thereon, and punish all persons that were found guilty. The term of apprenticeship for the guild (whose chief products are described as 'broad cloths, woollen goods, camblets, velvets, serges, poplin and taffety') was seven years, and before obtaining 'the freedom of the guild' all apprentices had to satisfy the Master and Wardens of their skill.¹

In 1750 the Weavers erected a Hall in the prosperous district of the Coombe (i.e. the hollow or river valley of the underground river the Poddle), in the Earl of Meath's Liberty, which was then the centre of the weaving industry. This was built of old Dublin brick with an oval doorway decorated with stone, over which was placed a gilt statue of George II by Van Nost—a mark of the guild's loyalty. The building still exists, but in such a dilapidated condition that it would hardly be recognized were it to be visited by its once prosperous owners. The statue has been destroyed, while the tapestry portrait of the King which once hung in the hall has been taken elsewhere.

The Guild of the Merchant Tailors, founded early in the fifteenth century, had also a Hall which was situated in Back Lane, near the old Corn Market, where it still stands. Until the opening of the Music Hall in Fishamble Street in 1741 this was the largest public room in Dublin, and as such was often in request for balls, concerts, auctions, and lotteries. Later in the century it was also lent by the guild for political meetings, and was at one time rented by the Society of the United Irishmen. On June 24th, the anniversary of their patron, the Tailors' Guild used to march from their Hall in procession to hear a sermon at St. John's Church, in

¹ There is an account of the Weavers' Guild by W. C. Stubbs in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. xlix (1919), pp. 60–88.

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Fishamble Street, close by, after which they had dinner in force at a tavern. The members of this guild seem to have been fond of festivities, for similar banquets were held on Assembly days and quarter-days and on the anniversary of King William's birthday.¹

As trade associations the Dublin guilds may be said to have been in a state of decline throughout the eighteenth century, their power being threatened on the one hand by the spread of capitalist enterprise, and on the other by the growth of discontent among the workmen, who formed 'combinations' to get what they wanted. During the first half of the century, when religious feeling was strong, no guild admitted Roman Catholic merchants or craftsmen to its membership, but as time went on, both as the result of the growth of toleration and from motives of economic expediency, Roman Catholic apprentices were gradually admitted to many guilds provided they agreed to pay the fees and serve the appointed time. By 1793, when Catholics were definitely admitted by Act of the Irish Parliament to all corporations, guild opinion had advanced so far that several of them actually declared for Catholic Emancipation. Many of the guilds also voted against the Union, as being, in the words of a petition of the Merchant Tailors, 'injurious to the rising prosperity of Ireland.'²

The Dublin Corporation were bound by their charter once every three years to perambulate the limits of the Lord Mayor's jurisdiction, to make stands or stations at various points in the city, and to skirt the Earl of Meath's Liberty, which had a local jurisdiction of its own. In the course of the procession the Lord Mayor thrust his sword through the wall of a certain house, and concluded the ceremony by being rowed out in a barge from the end of the North Wall

¹ There is an account of the Guild of Merchant Tailors by H. F. Twiss in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. xlix (1919), pp. 93-4.

² The Dublin guilds in the eighteenth century may almost be described as political clubs. They concerned themselves largely with politics, passed resolutions of a controversial nature, presented addresses to members of parliament and parliamentary candidates, and passed votes of censure on municipal representatives.

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into the Bay, where at a certain point he threw a dart with all his force into the sea. In the place where this fell a buoy was fixed, and as far as that limit the Mayor's warrant reached, and was extended to every vessel.

In July of the year when the ceremony was due a summons was sent to each of the twenty-five guilds who were represented on the Common Council ordering them to ride the franchises—i.e. mark the boundaries of the civic jurisdictions defined by the city charters. Preparations followed for the first of August, the day on which the procession was held, and in these no trouble was spared, for not only did every one enjoy the festival, but it provided an excellent advertisement for each of the crafts. In the procession, which was accompanied by bands of music and included the city officers in all their robes and paraphernalia, the masters rode on horses, while the journeymen and apprentices went on foot. Each guild had an immense carriage with a wide platform and a high canopy, the whole being decorated with gold paint, ribbons, and draperies. This was drawn by six or eight horses, who were also decked out and caparisoned. On the platforms were the implements of the various trades, and expert hands were at work during the entire perambulation, which generally lasted from eight to nine hours. The Printers had a printing-press from which they struck off innumerable handbills, together with songs and odes to the Lord Mayor, which they threw among the people. The Weavers, who wore large wigs of wool of different colours, wove ribbons which they threw to the spectators, or tossed patterns of the fabrics which they were making into the air. The Skinners and Tanners were dressed up in sheepskins and goatskins. The Butchers wore hides with long horns, and as they went along brandished huge knives. The Hosiers had a loom weaving stockings in their carriage. The Shoemakers displayed a prince and princess dressed in gold and silver robes, with two pages carrying a crimson velvet cushion which bore a golden slipper. The Millers and Bakers exhibited men dressed up in wheatsheaves. The Vintners showed a Bacchus arrayed in ivy and vine leaves. The Upholsterers' chief exhibit was a man entirely dressed in feathers, who was a great favourite with the crowd (according to O'Keeffe, who often

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witnessed the procession in his youth) on account of his 'comic attitudes'. The part taken by the Smiths in the spectacle was the most showy and effective. They displayed their forge in full working order, and had a huge phaeton, drawn by horses decorated with flowers and ribbons, on which sat a beautiful girl to represent Venus attended by cupids. On one side rode Vulcan on a large horse dressed in black armour, on the other was Mars in shining armour, while behind came Argus with an immense peacock's tail.

There are many references to the riding of the 'fringes' (i.e. franchises) in such records of the guilds as have been preserved. It was one of the great shows of the city, many thousands taking part in the procession, for which no expense was spared. According to a contemporary, the fame of the spectacle was widespread, it being visited by many persons both from England and the Continent. 'This singular procession,' wrote Barrington, 'I twice witnessed—it has since been abolished, after having worked well and done no harm from the days of the very first Lord Mayor of Dublin.' Barrington was disgusted because a banquet had been substituted for the show, and remarks sarcastically that the populace had been deprived of an object of 'great attraction and pride' 'for the sole purpose of gratifying 'the sensual appetites of a city aristocracy who court satiety and indigestion at the expense of their humbler brethren.' At the time when he wrote his *Personal Sketches* (1827) the city guilds had lost nearly all their remaining powers, and in 1840 by the Municipal Corporations Act the old city council was swept away and the government of civic affairs placed in the hands of the whole body of burgesses.

One of the factors making for the decline of the guild system in Dublin was the formation of combinations among the workmen. These also proved a considerable handicap to industry. There is no doubt that wages in times of depression were low (although the level of remuneration in Ireland in the eighteenth century was generally higher than in England), that it was necessary for skilled workers to protect themselves from the stream of unskilled labour from the country, and that the Irish worker had no Poor Law to fall back upon, but journeymen in Dublin were so insistent in

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their demands and so violent in their methods that they often managed to kill the industries that supported them, and incidentally ruined themselves.

It had been suggested that Whiteboyism in the country had accustomed the town worker to methods of sabotage; however that may have been, he was certainly noted for the violence of his methods in trade disputes.

We read in the *Hibernian Magazine* for December 1777:

‘On Sunday night last a number of journeymen skimmers forced themselves into the dwelling house and concerns of one of their employers in Watling Street, who it seems had refused to comply with their unlawful regulations in that occupation. After destroying the implements and utensils belonging to his trade, they proceeded to cut several parcels of wool, and threw large quantities of unmanufactured skins into the Liffey. It is alleged [adds the writer] that the damage sustained in this riotous transaction amounted to a very considerable sum of money.’

In the same journal for July 1787 we read of a number of similar cases of violence that had just been tried in the King’s Bench. Some hundreds of journeymen hosiers who had agreed with their employer to take a small reduction of wages in order to secure a contract appeared in front of his house a few days later, threatened him with personal injury, and dragged his stocking-frames through the streets. About the same time a number of calico and cotton printers were indicted for combination as, by refusing to work, they had caused considerable unemployment among their fellows. On the occasion of these prosecutions we learn that the judge was ‘remarkably severe in his animadversions on combinations which he lamented had of late been too prevalent.’

Gandon’s difficulties with his workmen while building the Custom House have already been touched upon. The following extract from his journal is not without interest:

‘Hitherto, none but Dublin masons were employed in the city, but for the expedition of this great work it was found necessary to employ all who would offer. This was opposed by the Dublin fraternity, unless the aliens would take an

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oath of secrecy, subscribe one guinea each, and submit to their laws of combination. This in some cases was at first resisted, but gradually and of necessity afterwards complied with; and generally those reluctant converts subsequently exhibited a zeal more turbulent and refractory than the others. It was just the same with English carpenters and stone-cutters who were invited over; they were very orderly at first, but in the end more refractory than the natives, more exorbitant in their demands for increase of wages, and worse by far as to drunkenness. The fund collected by these combinator, was not applied as in England to relieve in time of sickness, or in case of death to meet the expenses of a decent funeral. It was given to a few idle vagabonds as a stipend to enable them to live without daily labour. These fellows were called 'orators', and were attached to each of the fraternities, attending the clubs of the various artificers in order to keep up a perpetual ferment, rendering the men dissatisfied with their employers. Whenever an order for any great work was given, particularly if much expedition and exertion was required, then there was a 'strike' or 'turn out' for more wages; as long as this lasted they were supported in idleness, and if any were sent to prison, they fared best of all, being deemed martyrs.¹

Throughout the eighteenth century laws were passed by the Irish Parliament against the combinations of workmen, while the English Combination Acts were later extended to Ireland. Master's defence associations were also formed, but none of the counter-measures that were taken seem to have been effective. At the time of the Union, and after, combinations in Dublin increased to quite an alarming extent—those who refused to join them being often in danger of their lives. Many Irish workers, indeed, actually preferred to emigrate to England and take lower wages there than to suffer the tyranny of their own combinations at home.

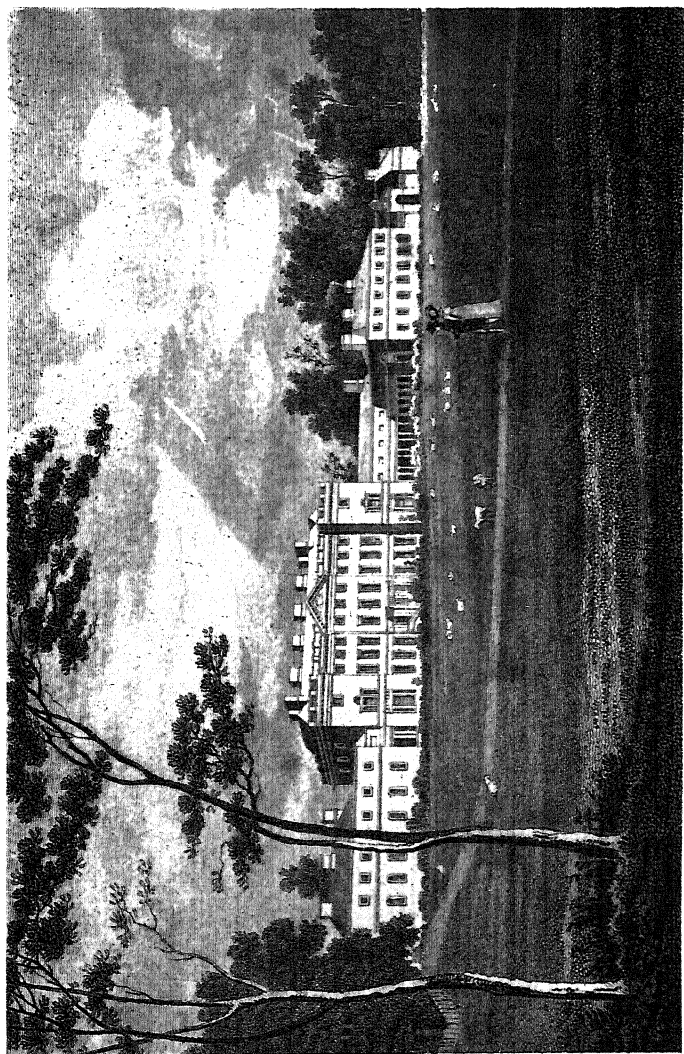
Of the Dublin industries that suffered from the effects of

¹ There is an account of a riot in Dublin in the *Hibernian Magazine* of December 1777 in which the Skinners threw unmanufactured skins into the Liffey because an employer had refused to comply with their unlawful regulations.

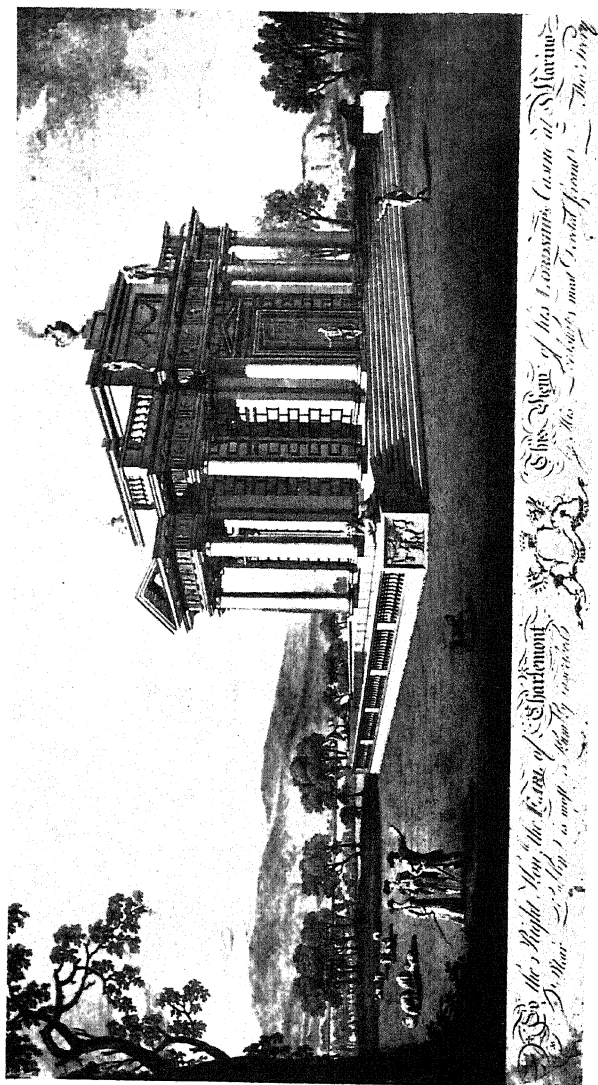
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combination we may select shipbuilding as an example. In this industry the demands made by the men, both with regard to wages and the conditions of apprenticeship, were quite unreasonable. 'Ireland is the dearest country in the world for labour,' declared a master-shipbroker who gave evidence before a Government Commission in 1836; 'every description of artisan demands at least one-third more than in England; there is even a combination among the common porters on the quay, who would rather starve than work under the regulated price. . . . I am so disgusted at the conduct of the men [he adds] that I am resolved never to drive another nail here, if I can possibly avoid it.' A master-shipbuilder giving evidence before the same Commission observed: 'The body of shipwrights will allow no others to work; the consequence is they have destroyed the trade, many ships having been sent to Liverpool this last winter, from want of hands to get them repaired. Work is plentiful enough,' he said, 'if the men would be allowed to work. Ships are now building in Sunderland for Dublin. . . . Half a million has been expended within the last twenty years in shipbuilding, in England and other places, which might have been expended here—not more than sixty shipwrights,' he added, 'constitute the body who will keep the entire trade to themselves; old men amongst them, who are not capable of earning a fourth of the wages, are paid exactly the same as the best workmen. . . . Again, they will in docking a ship have double the men necessary, . . . if you find any fault [with them] they strike directly.' This witness concluded his evidence before the Commission by confessing that, owing to strained relations with his men, he had been obliged to carry pistols about with him for years.

Pistols would seem to have been necessary indeed to judge from other evidence received on the same occasion. A master-builder declared: 'About 1826 we were obliged to turn away the combinator and employ countrymen. After a while, they would take every opportunity of assaulting these men. When we threatened to prosecute them for so doing, they used to bribe the men whom they had beaten to leave Dublin. In 1827 a sawyer was murdered in Thomas Street, in open day, who did not belong to their body. . . .



CARTON, COUNTY KILDARE, THE SEAT OF THE DUKE OF LEINSTER
From an engraving of a drawing by George Petrie



THE CASINO AT LORD CHARLEMONT'S VILLA OF MARINO AT CLONTARF, NEAR DUBLIN
 From an engraving of a drawing by Thomas Ivory (undated)

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About eight months since, my brother and self were frequently insulted in the streets by the body-men, who used to call us the *bloody colt employers*—meaning, that we employed those men who did not belong to the Union. In October last they attacked my brother in Stephen's Green and beat him severely. . . . On the 30th of January last in Christ Church Place, a quarter before six, a body of men came behind me, and struck me so severely that I was carried away senseless; . . . the men were no doubt employed by the body-men (carpenters) to commit this outrage. Five hundred pounds was offered for their discovery by the Lord-Lieutenant. We tried to get up a subscription in addition, and put our names down for fifty pounds, but not a *single* person in Dublin could be found to subscribe *through fear*.'

It was the same story in the silk industry. A silk-weaver remarked in giving his evidence: 'Were it not for the superiority of our tabinets and velvets, the name of a silk-weaver would now be scarcely known in Dublin.' Mr. Otway, the Hand Loom Weaver Commissioner, reported as follows in 1840:

'It cannot be doubted that illegal and dangerous combinations among the workmen have operated most injuriously on the trade, driven many of the most extensive manufacturers out of it, and deterred others from directing that capital and intelligence towards it by which alone it could be preserved or enabled to compete with the other silk-weaving districts of the Empire. If not checked, this system will speedily drive away the portion of the silk trade which now remains.'

When in Dublin, Otway inspected the factory of a manufacturer who had purchased Jacquard looms and a machine for winding silk. This man informed him that he was giving up his business, because the workers would not allow him to use the machine, limited the number of workers who were to work for him, and refused to pay an economic price for the use of the looms. Owing to the tyranny of the combinations, the Commissioner observes that many of the best Irish silk-weavers have emigrated to Manchester, and other silk-weaving districts in England, where they had been glad to get employment at a much lower rate than that fixed by the

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trade in Dublin. Want of capital, English competition, and lack of trade were no doubt the chief depressing factors in Irish industry, but the unreasonable demands of the men must also be reckoned with. In the words of a master-tailor who gave evidence in 1836, 'The masters must now give way to the men on all occasions, or give up their trade.'

The commercial crises and trade fluctuations of the eighteenth century were naturally a depressing influence in the industrial development of Dublin. The first marked period of distress resulted from the English restrictions on the woollen industry, which caused considerable unemployment among the weavers, and was followed by large importations of English cloth. Swift's *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures* was the first of his Irish tracts, and his reply to England's prohibition of Irish woollens. The weavers' quarter lay round St. Patrick's Cathedral, and so he had special opportunities of becoming acquainted with their wretchedness. A fund was raised for the weavers, and a special performance was given for their benefit at the theatre; for this he wrote an epilogue in which he exhorted the Irish to wear native stuffs. It is well known that the Dean stinted himself in what he called the 'superfluities' to give money to the poor, for whom he also established a loan fund out of his own income.¹ So great was his popularity in the Liberties that he was often heard to say that the people ought to subscribe forty shillings a year to keep him in hats, on account of the numerous bows that he received on his walks, all of which he considered it a duty to return punctiliously.

Between 1734 and 1740 unemployment was rife owing mainly to English competition; and the depression of 1773, universal throughout the British Isles, had severe consequences for Ireland. It was during the American War, however, that industrial distress reached its zenith. The export of linen to America was cut off, American privateers

¹ Swift wrote to his friend Knightley Chetwood on 3rd January 1714, 'I hear they think me a smart Dean; and that I am for doing good. My notion is, that if a man cannot mend the public he should mend old shoes if he can do no better; and therefore I endeavour in the little sphere I am placed to do all the good it is capable of.' *Correspondence of Swift* (ed. F. E. Ball, Vol. II (1911), p. 265).

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attacked Irish shipping, while the lucrative trade in smuggled woollens with the Continent was entirely stopped. 'In this and the last year,' wrote Hely-Hutchinson in his *Commercial Restraints of Ireland*, published in 1779, 'above 20,000 manufacturers in Dublin were reduced to beggary for want of employment.'

The situation led to a strong demand for protective duties on the part of the Irish manufacturers, and feeling ran so high that a Parliamentary Committee was appointed in March 1784 to examine into the state of trade and industry in Ireland and consider the advisability of granting bounties on the sale of Irish manufactures. In the evidence submitted it was stated that not one-third of the looms that had been employed in the woollen industry ten years previously were then in use; and that in the silk industry, which normally employed 11,270 persons, 5,366 were idle. It was in this year that Pitt's 'Commercial Propositions' were first formulated, and most Members of Parliament were afraid that if protective measures were adopted in Ireland the English would retaliate by placing heavy duties on Irish linens. Nothing therefore was done. This naturally led to a great deal of popular discontent, and severe riots broke out in Dublin. Lord Carlow wrote from Dublin to his wife on 8th April 1784:

'The populace of this city are very much enraged at the rejection of a favourite Bill for protecting their manufactures by laying a tax on English. They even surrounded the Parliament House last Tuesday and threatened to hang some of the members, when the military were obliged to be called out to disperse them, and the whole garrison remain since in constant readiness for duty.'

On this occasion many who had imported English goods were attacked, ladies' dresses were slashed in the streets, and bonfires were made in the Liberties of English and foreign cloths that had been looted from the shops. Both the outbreak of the war with France and the Rebellion of 1798 caused a fresh setback to Dublin industries, which were even more severely hit during the Napoleonic wars—a season of high rents and prices. The wars restricted markets, caused

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difficulties in the obtaining of raw materials, and drew away many thousands of men for military or naval service.

Some of the economic measures taken by well-intentioned authorities, such as the Dublin Society, not only failed to remedy industrial evils but actually served to increase them. By the so-called Spitalfields Act of 1780, for example, the Society fixed the wages of Dublin weavers at the same rate as those of London and thus removed the right of bargaining essential to a trade that was particularly subject to fluctuations. The establishment both of the Silk and Woollen Warehouses was also a mistake, for these retail houses, while benefiting the weaver, curtailed the profits of mercers and drapers, made the granting of credit facilities by them more difficult, and, since English capitalists could give longer credit to Dublin shopkeepers, actually increased the import of foreign stuffs.

Yet another drag upon the Irish economic system was the chaotic state of the currency, the lack of a mint, and of a sound banking system. In the early part of the century the circulation consisted (apart from English gold and silver) of foreign coins of all kinds, a medley of bankers' bills and notes, and tokens (unregulated as to material, size or quantity) issued by individuals for their own profit.

It was chiefly to remedy the hardship caused by the latter that a patent was granted (1723-5) to William Wood an iron-master of Birmingham to coin half-pence and farthings for Ireland. The scheme for 'debased' coinage was however so unpopular that it had to be withdrawn. It was attacked by Swift (who raised the whole question of Anglo-Irish relationships) in his *Drapier's Letters* (1724), but it was probably the threat to local profits that actually wrecked the plan.¹ Subsequent legislation made the currency position in Ireland somewhat easier but after the suspension of specie payments in England in 1797 Ireland was rapidly flooded with paper notes. So great, indeed, was the over-issue of paper that the exchange with England was severely affected, and there was a considerable rise of prices. When cash payments were

¹ See an article by A. Goodwin on 'Wood's Halfpence' in the *English Historical Review* for October 1936, vol. li, pp. 647-74.

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resumed after the war, the situation began to mend, but it was not until the Act of 1825, when the English currency was introduced into Ireland, that there was any marked improvement.¹

Before 1783, when the Bank of Ireland was founded, there were only two concerns in Dublin which could be compared with the great banks of London. The most important of these was owned by the Huguenot family of La Touche. David La Touche had first come to Ireland as an officer in the army of William of Orange. He subsequently settled in Dublin, where he started a manufacture of silk, poplin, and cambric, and also founded the bank that was carried on by his descendants.² In 1778 this famous bank, which was patronized by all the nobility and gentry, was in such a strong position that it was able to lend the Government £20,000, and when the Bank of Ireland was founded David La Touche, grandson of the original settler, became its first governor.

La Touche's was a tower of strength, however, compared with some of the other banking houses in eighteenth-century Dublin. The business of banking was then free and uncontrolled, and anyone could issue banknotes and silver and copper coin. The quality of the currency, as has been pointed out, was not high. Over-issues of paper were made, and there was a good deal of speculation. Failures naturally were common, and merchants were the principal sufferers. About 1780 there was a vigorous demand in Dublin for the establishment of a national bank on the same lines as the Bank of England, and numerous pamphlets were published which exposed the iniquities of the old banking system. The anonymous author of *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (1789) wrote as follows:

¹ Between 1797 and 1804 the note issue of the Bank of Ireland increased from about £600,000 to £2,986,999. The note issue of the Bank of England increased during the same period from ten to seventeen millions. See George O'Brien, 'The last Years of the Irish Currency' in the *Economic History Supplement to the Economic Journal* (May 1927).

² See 'David Digges La Touche, Banker, and a few of his Descendants,' by Mrs. A. M. Fraser, in *Dublin Historical Record* (vol. v.) See also B. O'Mullane 'The Huguenots in Dublin' *Dublin Historical Record*, vol. viii.

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'The interests of the merchant and the community are sacrificed to the convenience and profit of a few individuals. Governed by secret and unknown motives, instead of allowing the merchant a safe and certain navigation, with which for a time he is deluded, he is suddenly and without any apparent cause driven on shoals or rocks, where he perishes without a hand stretched out to his assistance. The caprice of a partner, the pretended settlement of their accounts, the dread of an approaching linen market, the failure of some merchant, causes them without any notice to forbear discounting. The anxious merchant turns over his bills, places the best uppermost, and, like some unfortunate criminal dragged to execution, approaches with a pallid cheek and trembling hand, the counter of the banker—he watches his eyes—he examines his countenance, as if the die of life was about to be cast; and now he either revives in all the transport of happiness, or sinks into the gloomy vale of dejection and despair.'

The Dublin manufacturer and merchant had many difficulties to contend with, but one suspects that not a few of his misfortunes were his own fault. There is a good deal of evidence, for instance, to show that he was infected with the same virus as the Irish nobility and gentry—an inordinate love of show and taste for extravagance. In the *Essay on the Manufactures of Ireland* published in 1798 by Thomas Wallace, of the King's Inns, he tells how the manufacturers would employ foremen or shopmen to superintend their workmen, though they could easily have performed this service themselves, and how they would keep a carriage, buy a villa, and entertain their friends with wine—their standard of living being much higher than that of an English manufacturer of the same income. 'With the merchants of Dublin', wrote an English traveller in 1779, 'you never see a stinted dinner at two o'clock with a glass of port after it; but you find a table not only plentifully but luxuriously spread with choice of wines both at dinner and after it.'

In times of depression, when industry was suspended in the Liberties, Warburton describes how the whole popula-

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tion would emigrate from their 'desolate homes' and pour down upon 'the more opulent parts of the city'.

'The passenger is every moment surrounded by groups of strange figures [he writes]; their greasy and squalid dress and pallid faces strikingly distinguish them, and a certain cast of countenance on which sickness and famine stamp a ghastly expression, often excites surprise and alarm. It is much to the credit of the poor people that the alarm is unfounded. Their distresses often render them importunate, but they never behave with incivility, much less with outrage.'

This may have been true of the Dublin mob in the years of depression immediately after the Union, but that there was constant rioting in the city throughout the eighteenth century is a well-known fact. In the earlier part of the period a chronic feud between the Butchers and Weavers (known as Ormond and Liberty Boys respectively) was carried on with great bitterness. Sometimes regular battles took place between these parties—cattle-drivers, butchers, carriers from slaughter-houses, stable-boys, and drunken vagabonds from the neighbourhood of Ormond Quay on the one hand, and on the other tailors, weavers, unemployed workmen, and desperadoes from the Coombe. Stones were thrown in these conflicts, the butchers used their knives, streets and bridges were taken and retaken, people were wounded and killed, and large numbers of persons carried off to Newgate. Charles Wesley, who was preaching in Dublin in the autumn of 1747, wrote as follows in his *Journal*:

'Woe is me now, for my soul is wearied because of murderers which this city is full of! The Ormond mob and Liberty mob seldom part, till one or more are killed. A poor constable was the last, whom they beat and dragged about, till they had killed him, and then hung him up in triumph. None was called in question for it; but the earth covered his blood.'¹

These battles must have been an abomination to respect-

¹ Wesley himself was attacked by the Dublin mob on several occasions. He was once hit by a stone.

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able citizens, for they often lasted for several days. Those that were peaceably inclined remained indoors, and prudent tradesmen put up their shop-fronts till order was restored.

The Rev. Thomas Campbell, writing in 1777, speaks of the 'squalid appearance of the Dublin canaille' and remarks: 'In the morning, before the higher classes are up, you would imagine that half the prisons in Europe had been opened and their contents emptied into this place.' Yet there must have been many pleasing characters among them, to judge from an illustrated broadsheet headed: *The Dublin Cries; or, a Representation of the Various Cries and Callings throughout the Streets Lanes and Alleys of the City and Liberties of Dublin*, printed in Dublin about 1775. This shows us the Curds and Whey Woman; the Sweep and his Boy; the Woman selling Hot Cakes; the Man selling Butter and Milk; the Girl selling Vegetables; the Rag Woman; the itinerant Green Grocer; the Earthenware-seller; the Broom Man; the Tinker; the Girl selling Cherries; the Cobbler; the Oyster Seller; and the old Watchman with his bill and lanthorn parading the streets and calling the hour. The hawkers of Dublin must have been very much like those of London, but the Fish-woman and Cockle-seller, the Turf-seller and the Newsvendor, were specially characteristic of the Irish capital. The fish-women in their picturesque dresses cried Boyne salmon and herrings from Dublin Bay (the cockles gathered by day on neighbouring strands were sold in the streets at night), the turf-seller was provided with donkey and cart with which he visited the canal boats fresh from the country, while the newsvendor called, 'Bloody news; last night's packet; bloody news. Here's the monthly magazines and all the newest publications.'

Throughout the Georgian period Ireland did a large trade in provisions. The rapidly growing home population had to be fed, and there was a good market in the English Colonies and in the West Indies.¹ During the French war the English Army and Navy were supplied, and after the Peace a large trade was done with Great Britain in butter, bacon, eggs,

¹ Before the French Revolution Ireland did a good export trade with France in butter, linen, salted beef, etc., the goods being chiefly for the use of the French colonies. The loss of these colonies greatly diminished the trade.



BLOODY News, last Night's Packet.
bloody News.—Here's the Monthly
Magazines, and all the newest Publica-
tions



FRESH Herrings, large Dublin-bay
Herring: alive here.—Here's a large
fresh Cod alive here.—Here's large Sole
or Places alive, or fine Boy'n Salmon.



BUYE the dry Turf; buye Turf;
buye the dry Turf.—Here's the dry
Bog-a-Wood.—Here's the Chips to light
the Fire; Maids!



NINE o'Clock! Nine o'Clock! past
Nine o'Clock, and a dark cloudy
Night.

DUBLIN STREET CRIES

From an illustrated broadsheet published in Dublin about 1775 reproduced
in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* (1924)

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and live cattle, the latter being greatly facilitated by the growth of steamer transport.

In 1818, when Warburton's *History of Dublin* was published, the great wholesale market for cattle¹ and hay in Dublin was at Smithfield (on the north side of the river, near the Four Courts), the approaches to which were so narrow and difficult that the passages were often choked up with beasts, while hay-carts had sometimes to be left on the outskirts, where their contents were not infrequently pilfered by passers-by. There were nine other established markets in the various parishes. These were generally in poor areas with insufficient ventilation, and as cattle were usually killed on the spot, there being no public slaughter-houses, they were anything but savoury places owing to the accumulation of offal and ordure. 'Several very offensive nuisances exist in the City of Dublin such as dairies, slaughter-houses and the practice of throwing dirt and offal, etc., out of the markets at night,' according to the *Report of the Commissioners appointed to enquire into the Conduct and Management of the Corporation for Paving, Cleansing, and Lighting the Streets of Dublin* in 1806. 'It appears in evidence, that none of the said dairies or slaughter-houses are provided with sewers, or any other means of preserving cleanliness, in consequence of which the filth is accumulated in the most noxious and offensive manner, and frequently spreads over the adjoining streets, occasioning the most intolerable stench imaginable.'

The cattle-markets, as well as the streets, were also the scene of bull-baiting, which sometimes led to riots, and cruelties were practised by the drovers that would not be tolerated at the present day. 'I was frequently shocked at the cruelties exercised by the "penny boys" as they are called, who drive cattle from Smithfield to slaughter,' wrote an Englishman who was in Dublin in 1791: 'they are permitted by the police, contrary to the Act of the legislature, to carry bludgeons, with which they beat and batter the heads and legs of sheep in particular in a manner the most savage that can be conceived.'

Poultry and eggs were sold near Newgate, bacon and

¹ According to Warburton, 30,000 head of cattle were annually bought and sold here, and of these a considerable number were exported.

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butter in Kevin Street. Fish, which was plentiful and very popular, was sold by auction at the Gate of Ormond Market, and then cried through the streets by the fish-women, who carried it on open sieves on their heads. The Grain Market was in Thomas Street. Warburton remarks that fruit in Dublin was 'not so good or abundant as in other places because the science of practical gardening was not so well understood nor carried on with such zeal and emulation as elsewhere.' The butter and milk were both scanty and of poor quality—at least, such of these commodities as were produced in Dublin itself. This was not to be wondered at, for most of the cows in the city were fed on garbage in narrow and filthy backyards.

As for commercial transactions, it was at the Royal Exchange that bills on London were purchased, while wholesale business was transacted at the Commercial Buildings, erected in Dame Street in 1799. Before that, goods had been bought and samples shown in Crampton Court,¹ near the Castle, a small, square enclosure which had interesting old houses and doors, but few of these are now standing.

In Newenham's *View of the Natural, Political, and Commercial Circumstances of Ireland*, published in 1809, he gives the total value of exports from Ireland for 1750 as £1,862,833 and that of the imports as £1,531,654. In 1800, he estimates, the value of the exports was £4,079,271 and that of the imports £6,183,457. Between 1800 and 1826 the total value of Irish trade almost doubled. Irish manufactured goods, with the exception of linen cloth, suffered greatly from English competition, but the export of provisions had continued to increase, and so had the import of English manufactures. The value of the Customs collected at the Port of Dublin in 1784 was £485,039. In 1800 it was £826,848, while by 1816 it had risen to £1,309,908.

The principal exports from Ireland to the West Indies in this year following the Peace were glass, soap, candles, linens, and coarsely manufactured cotton for slaves, in exchange for which she took sugar, rum, cotton, and coffee.

¹ Crampton Court, the unofficial Change of Dublin, where the merchants met and made their bargains, was called after Philip Crampton, a wealthy bookseller who was elected Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1758.

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To the United States Ireland exported glass, coals, hay, lime, bricks, manufactured iron goods, and linen, receiving in return tobacco, flax-seed, corn, cotton, tar, resin, and turpentine. To the Baltic she sent French and Portuguese wines, and received hemp and flax, iron, timber, tallow, bristles, and isinglass, but this trade was declining by 1818. France sent to Ireland corn, wine, oil, vinegar and brandy, cork-wood, fruits, and kid skins for gloves. Ireland had done her principal trade with France during the eighteenth century at Bordeaux, from which she had imported immense quantities of claret, but the consumption of wine had greatly diminished after the Union, partly because of the social exodus to England and partly on account of high duties. Very little export trade was done with Holland or the Mediterranean countries. The former exported to Ireland Geneva, madder, toys, and flax-seed, and the second silk, marble, liquorice, drugs, currants, and fruits. From England were imported seeds, steel, woollen drapery, colonial and foreign produce, besides large quantities of coal. Ireland exported to England corn, oatmeal, flour, linen, hides, horns, live cattle, and provisions.

Much had been done in the course of the eighteenth century to deepen Dublin Bay and improve the harbour.¹ The growth of trade in the Irish capital was largely due to the improvement of the port. In 1791 a basin and docks, which cost £112,752 and occupied a space of thirty-five acres at Ringsend, on the south side of the river, had been completed; while a 'grand basin' was opened by the Earl of Camden in the presence of 60,000 spectators on the north side of the river in 1796.² In 1784 the number of ships invoiced at the port was 2,803, and the tonnage amounted to 228,956. In 1817, 3,483 ships were invoiced, the tonnage figure having risen to 349,000.

¹ The Ballast Office was established in 1707 as a corporation to improve the port and harbour of Dublin, and subsequently the ground at both sides of the river were enclosed. The South Wall was begun in 1748, from Ringsend on the south of the Bay through the Pigeon House to the lighthouse (built in 1768).

² St. George's Docks were opened in the presence of George IV in 1821.

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The Union increased the volume of Irish trade,¹ but had a pernicious effect upon many Irish industries. The textiles (with the exception of the linen industry in the North, where sufficient capital was available for the purchase of the new machinery of the Industrial Revolution) suffered in particular—and especially as far as Dublin was concerned—from the effects of English competition.

‘The rent, or value, of houses in many parts of Dublin has fallen 30 per cent [wrote “Hibernicus” in *A Letter to the Right Honourable Sir John Newport*, published in Dublin in 1821], and in that part of it called the Liberty, it has, perhaps, fallen 50 per cent. In this part of the city, in former years, was a wealthy and highly respectable population. Its chief trade was in leather, silk, and woollens. As these declined, the cotton business succeeded, and so lately as about twenty years back, about 1,500 looms were kept employed. The greater part of the Liberty now presents a most wretched appearance; and in times of public scarcity, or sickness, the situation of the lower classes of its inhabitants has been appalling to humanity. The looms employed in the Liberty on woollen cloth at present may be about 100. Thirty years ago they amounted to 700.’

Nine years later Mr. Robert Roe, Director of the Bank of Ireland, in giving evidence before the Select Committee on the State of the Poor in Ireland said: ‘The superiority of the English manufacturer in machinery and capital renders it scarcely possible for the Dublin manufacturer to compete with him, especially now that all the restrictions on the commercial intercourse of the two countries have been completely removed. The Dublin manufacturers having little capital, and no demand except that of a limited domestic market, any occasional surplus of stock is productive of considerable distress to themselves and to the artificers dependent on them. Tabinet (silk stuff) too, the fabric to which they have particularly directed their attention, seems of late

¹ Between 1800 and 1823 the trade of Ireland helped by the removal of customs barriers and the new steamer transport progressed as a whole, the provision trade being especially flourishing. But there was a falling off in woollen exports, a decline in cotton, and the export of linen did not increase.

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years to have fallen much into general disuse, and the manufacturers appear not to have the power of adapting their supplies to the fluctuations of fashion in the same way as the English manufacturer.' The witness explained that this was due not only to want of capital and the consequent lack of improved machinery, but to the development of steam navigation, which by facilitating communication with the British markets, while lowering prices and benefiting the consumer, had adversely affected the wholesale merchants. 'The mercantile classes', he said, 'have dwindled away to a remarkable degree, there is no longer any scope in Dublin for extensive transactions, or the employment of large capitals.'

After the Union the fact that a great many of the nobility and gentry left Ireland was a severe blow for the industries of Dublin. A master paper-stainer who gave evidence before the Commission for Inquiry into the Condition of the Poorer Classes in Ireland in 1836 declared that paper-stainers, house-smiths, paper-hangers, carpenters, stucco-workers, and plasterers were all in a bad way, since 'the only persons in Dublin now who furnish their houses in any style or magnificence are professional men, and men in business who have amassed fortunes'. And a witness giving evidence before the Government Commission on Irish Industries that was appointed in 1885, referring to the famous cabinet-makers and furniture of Ireland before the Union, declared: 'Dublin has now become only a warehouse for cheap English furniture. . . . People go in for a cheap article now; they do not buy the solid mahogany tables that our fathers did.' Yet another witness spoke of the decline of coach-building owing to the fact that the gentry no longer ordered their carriages in Dublin, but imported them from London.

Much other evidence of the same kind could be given, but these instances must suffice. Before the Union eighty-two of the Peers who sat in the Irish Parliament kept accounts at La Touche's Bank. The ledgers of the bank showed that these personages spent an aggregate amount of about £624,000 a year in Dublin. The city also had the advantage of the expenditure of each of the wealthy 300 Commoners who sat in the Lower House, which has been estimated on an average as between £2,000 and £3,000 a year. Opinions

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may differ as to the general economic results of the Union; but no one can doubt that the removal of many handsome bank balances to London was a serious loss to Dublin.¹

¹ A certain apathy was noticeable among Dublin shopkeepers in the years immediately following the Union. J. W. Croker (see his *An Intercepted Letter*, (1804), pp. 22-3), notes that they often displayed a 'sullen surliness', and seemed to prefer 'extortion and stagnation' to 'small profits and quick returns'. He says that the same things were to be seen in the shops all the year round and that there was very little variety; at the same time very high prices prevailed.

CHAPTER VIII

Impressions of English Visitors

He, I know not why, shewed upon all occasions an aversion to go to Ireland, where I proposed to him that we should make a tour. JOHNSON: 'It is the last place where I should wish to travel.' BOSWELL: 'Should you not like to see Dublin, Sir?' JOHNSON: 'No, Sir; Dublin is only a worse capital.'

JAMES BOSWELL, *Life of Johnson*

To the writings of travellers, those who seek a knowledge of the circumstances of a country through the medium of amusement, usually resort: and from these writings much valuable information has undoubtedly been derived.

T. NEWENHAM, *A view of the Natural, Political, and Commercial Circumstances of Ireland* (1809)

THE English are regarded by foreigners as a rambling nation,' wrote Sir Richard Colt Hoare,¹ the historian of Wiltshire, in a book describing his Irish travels published in 1807. Not that their love of travelling, he hastened to explain, was due to any dissatisfaction with their own country, but rather to a praiseworthy desire to collect information about foreign parts. During the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon it was no longer possible, however, for the Englishman to wander at will upon the Continent. 'Thanks to the ambition of the great ones of the earth, who have kept the world in a pretty constant state of warfare for the last twenty years', says an English visitor to Ireland in 1811, 'the British tourist has now a narrower range.' The limits of this range were supplied by the waters that surrounded his own island, but Ireland as a field for travel was also a possibility. The people might be dangerous

¹ Sir Richard Colt Hoare (1758-1838), in addition to his *Tour in Ireland* (1807) and his numerous books on Wiltshire, published a topographical *Catalogue of the British Isles and Travels in Italy and Sicily* (1819).

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(‘What can possess you to go to Ireland, where the hedges are lined with pikes and blunderbusses?’ exclaimed an acquaintance of Sir John Carr,¹ the noted traveller, when he was setting out on his visit to Ireland in 1806), and a country ‘full of mountains and bogs, with little to eat or drink but potatoes and whisky’, might be uncomfortable, but an Irish tour would at least provide that natural scenery which it was increasingly fashionable to admire, and as the ordinary Englishman, in the words of Barrington, knew as little of the country as he did of Kamchatka it could not but appeal to his love of adventure. The Union naturally greatly stimulated English interest in Ireland. Many felt that the country, being now definitely part of the Empire, was well worth encouragement. Tourists wished to know something of its possibilities and resources, and those who were influenced by the liberalism of the day, and considered from what they knew of the history of the country that the people had been oppressed, were anxious to make first-hand acquaintance with Irish grievances and air their own schemes for reform.

As a result not only of the increased interest taken in Ireland, but also of improved means of transport, Englishmen who have left records of their visits to the country were naturally more numerous towards the end of the Georgian period than in the eighteenth century; but there are a surprising number of ‘tours’ written by travellers in the earlier period, when the cross-channel journey presented greater difficulties. The most frequented passages to Ireland were those from Park Gate, a little seaport about twelve miles west of Chester, and Holyhead, in North Wales. A crossing could also be made from Bristol to Cork by those who did not object to the longer sea journey. This was, according to the author of the *Hibernia Curiosa*, published in 1769, the route generally taken by the ‘quality and gentry from Ireland that visit Bath’. The shortest passage that could be made from Great Britain to Ireland was from Port Patrick, in Galloway, to Donaghadee, in County Down, but, says the

¹ Sir John Carr, barrister of the Middle Temple, travelled for his health over the greater part of Europe and published accounts of his tours between 1803 and 1811.

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same writer, 'it is hardly worth while to go at least 200 miles by land to save 40 by sea from Holyhead, and therefore very few, except those whose business calls them to the North of Ireland, will go to Port Patrick for a passage'. Holyhead was the port from which the mails were dispatched and from which passengers who were in a hurry embarked. The majority were content to set off from Park Gate, and sailed direct from there to Dublin. By 1815 this particular route was falling into disuse, being compensated for by the passage from Liverpool, which had already become popular.

In the earlier part of the eighteenth century the land journey—from London, for instance—was performed either on horseback or in the crowded stage-coach. In 1785 mail-coaches began to run—a quicker and surer means of transport.

The journey from London to Chester on horseback took five or six days, and from Chester to Holyhead two or three. It was found to be very tiring, as we know from accounts given of personal experience by Swift and other less notable travellers. Some people hired post-chaises, or travelled with their carriages and horses—the Delanys, for instance. But horses were not improved by the sea-passage, and were sometimes found to be quite useless on landing. Tate Wilkinson relates that when he was crossing in a storm from Holyhead to Dublin in 1763 the horses on board kicked so violently that the sailors discussed the advisability of cutting their throats. They evidently believed that the ship's sides were in danger—an opinion he shared himself. In view of the fact that those who took the Holyhead road had a great deal of trouble and expense in getting themselves and their heavy luggage over the mountains and ferries of North Wales, the author of the *Hibernia Curiosa* advised intending travellers to choose the longer route and embark at Park Gate. He remarks, however, that the Welsh journey had recently become safer and more convenient through the making of a turnpike road and by the service of an occasional coach to Holyhead from Chester.

Towards the end of the century many people had a strong preference for the Holyhead route in spite of its disadvantages. They enjoyed the romantic scenery, and the foreign

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atmosphere of the inns, where they were entertained by harp-playing and cheered by Celtic hospitality. In Campbell's *Life of Mrs. Siddons* he describes how the great actress, *en route* for Dublin in 1802, walked round the ancient castle of Conway for an hour and listened to the harpers playing outside. The glorious Welsh mountains, we learn, threw her into 'a luxuriant reverie'. When the travellers who accompanied her descended at the Bridge of Penmaenmawr to look at the scenery a lady in the party exclaimed, 'This awful scenery makes me feel as if I were only a worm, or a grain of dust on the face of the earth'; whereupon Mrs. Siddons turned round and said, 'I feel very differently'.

One wonders what Mrs. Siddons thought of the roads—which were very bad, to judge by the accounts given by Arthur Young and De Quincey. It was not until 1815 that they began to be improved, as the result of the efforts of Telford. He converted the road from Shrewsbury to Holyhead, which had been in a shocking condition, into one of the best in the kingdom, and when the Menai Bridge had been built, and the road from London to Shrewsbury reconstructed, the work was completed which enabled the Irish mail to accomplish the 260 miles between London and Holyhead in 26 hours 55 minutes.¹

Mrs. Delany describes Park Gate as consisting of 'fifty or sixty houses in an irregular line by the water side', and Holyhead was not of much greater importance. Sir John Carr in 1806 refers to it as a dreary town with a gloomy aspect, and he mentions two inns 'both of them always crowded on account of the packets and neither of them very comfortable.' George Anne Bellamy, however, speaks well of the inn that was known as the Ferry House, where she was well accommodated with her 'two postillions, a guide, two footmen and three maids.'

Once arrived at the port, the timorous traveller unused to the sea, in the words of the author of the *Hibernia Curiosa*, surveyed 'the floating carriage' that was to convey him over the 'yawning unsubstantial element' with apprehension and fear. To quiet his anxiety he was advised to consult his pilot.

¹ See Sir A. Gibb, *The Story of Telford: the Rise of Civil Engineering* (1935).

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An imaginary conversation follows. 'Is there no danger, captain,' he asks, 'in this same passage to Dublin?'

'Why, faith, sir,' the captain replies, 'I will not positively assure you there is none, for fear you should be disappointed. The sailor, to be sure, is never out of danger on his element: however, I never went across yet but I came safe to the other side, and I hope I shall do so now.' 'Aye, captain, but the story of the pitcher—this same hope is but a weak security when a man has but three inches between his cabin and a bed of salt water. Have you never a fellow among your crew with a gallows' mark upon his face?' 'I hope not, sir.' 'But is there no insurance of a man's life for sixty miles only?' 'Oh, yes, the best in the world, my noble master—a bottle of claret, to put the want of it out of your head.'

This irony was all very well, but the lady who was observed by a Scottish traveller in 1807 exclaiming as she came on board with one foot on shore and the other on the packet, 'In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,' had really some cause for anxiety. When the weather was bad disasters were not infrequent. The packets setting out from Holyhead were sometimes blown back when actually in sight of the Irish shore, and wrecked on the rocks off the Welsh coast. Sometimes they were driven as far out of their course as Scotland. Wrecks in Dublin Bay were so frequent that numbers of masts could be seen here and there along the shore at low tide peeping over the surface of the water; and it was not unusual to be stranded on a sandbank and have to be taken off by boats.

The normal passage from Holyhead to Dublin took from ten to twelve hours, and when the wind was unfavourable passengers had to remain on board for much longer periods. George Anne Bellamy on one of her crossings to Ireland experienced a terrible storm and was on the sea for four days, suffering, as she tells us, 'the utmost excruciating sickness'; and when De Quincey crossed from Holyhead to Dublin in the summer of 1800 the passage took thirty hours on account of the lack of wind.¹ Embarking at Liverpool on 15th July 1814, Miss Anne Plumptre (daughter of the

¹ Arthur Young gives some interesting details of his dangerous passage to Ireland in his *Autobiography* (ed. M. Betham-Edwards, 1898).

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President of Queen's College, Cambridge)¹ describes her passage as follows:

'The first day we made very little progress, and at the expiration of 24 hours were no further off than Holyhead. About noon the second day we were entirely becalmed for three hours; and the tide setting against us we rather lost than gained way, so that the Welch coast was still in sight as evening closed in. In the night we had rather more wind, and at daybreak the Hill of Howth, the north point at the entrance of Dublin Bay, and Bray Head, a conspicuous height a little below the south point, were both in sight. About two o'clock we had advanced as far into the Bay as the state of the tide at that time would permit, and were obliged to come to anchor till there should be water sufficient to go over the bar into the harbour: this we were informed would be about six in the evening.'

The accommodation provided for passengers in the packet-boats was not good. Tate Wilkinson records that when crossing in 1757 every berth in the cabin was secured, and he was forced to sleep on the floor. When private carriages were on board they were unstrung from their leather springs and lashed on to the deck. These sometimes formed comfortable shelters for those unable to find room elsewhere. The notorious Mrs. Pilkington tells us in her *Memoirs* that on one of her journeys to Dublin she, 'her son, and two gentlemen' sat up all night in a coach belonging to Lady Kildare. The voyage was not always unenjoyable. When the ship was becalmed passengers would amuse themselves by watching the sailors fishing over the sides, and Mrs. Delany records how on 28th June 1744, the weather was so fine that she sat on deck all day making sketches and enjoyed a good dinner—though when night came on the ship rolled so much that she became 'very ill'.

Influential persons, such as Swift and Dr. Delany, were

¹ Anne Plumptre (1760-1818) was one of the first to make German plays known in London. Among her other publications was a *Narrative of a Three Years' (1802-5) Residence in France*. Her *Narrative of a Residence in Ireland (1814-15)* was ridiculed by Croker in the *Quarterly Review*, vol. xvi. She was a close friend of Helen Maria Williams, the authoress.

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occasionally allowed to use the yacht belonging to the Vice-regal Court—a privilege not to be despised, for it was armed as a protection against the French privateers that lurked round the coast in the earlier part of the eighteenth century. The majority of the passengers naturally used the ordinary packets, and this service was not a bad one. We learn from Sleator's *Dublin Chronicle* that in the spring of 1792 there were actually twenty-one ships (including the Government yacht) employed in the carriage of passengers to Dublin from the various ports in England.

Steamboats began to ply between Dublin and Holyhead in 1819, and though these considerably shortened the journey, they were not at first very comfortable. Maria Edgeworth, who crossed from Dublin to Holyhead in April 1820, disliked the jiggling motion, which she compared to the shake felt in a carriage while waiting at an Irish inn door when a pig was scratching himself against the back wheel.

From the middle of the eighteenth century, owing to the difficulty attending the passage up and down the river, it was customary for passengers arriving in Dublin by the packets to debark at a place on the breakwater known as the South Wall, which extended from Ringsend into Dublin Bay. This was known as the Pigeon House, and here a regular harbour was made, and an hotel erected in 1790. This was gradually superseded by Howth, a promontory on the north-east side of the Bay, where a harbour was built between 1807 and 1810. The Howth landing-place shortened the route some two or three hours, and vessels could always be sure of finding sufficient water there. George IV landed at Howth in August 1821, and took his departure from Dunleary—henceforth called Kingstown in his honour. A pier had been erected here between 1756 and 1765, and the harbour was begun in 1817. It was at first merely the station for the Liverpool and Dublin post-office packets, but gradually diverted the traffic from both Howth and the Pigeon House.

An unfavourable impression was often created at the Pigeon House both by the exorbitance of the boatmen and the squalid appearance of the crowd that was anxious to carry luggage. When Miss Plumptre arrived the sums demanded by the boatmen were so large that she and her

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fellow-passengers decided to remain on board for a time by way of protest. She had with her one of Lady Morgan's novels, which she obligingly lent to her acquaintances to while away the hours, but they had no provisions, and had soon to capitulate. Of the 'porters' we have the following account, which was written by Thomas Reid, an Irish surgeon in the British Navy who revisited Ireland in 1822.

'The place where we landed was crowded with creatures, of whom it would be difficult to give a correct description. Their dress, or more properly speaking, their undress, together with their emaciated, haggard looks, was well calculated to awaken feelings of commiseration. Most of them were without shoes, stockings, or coats; and many of them carried, rather than wore, garments composed of innumerable patches, exhibiting almost every variety of colour; it was utterly impossible to say what had been the original. They were all eager to carry our luggage up to the place where it was to be examined.'

To meet passengers and take them into Dublin, about three miles distant, a vehicle drawn by four horses and known as the 'Long Coach' was provided. It held sixteen inside passengers and as many outside, with their luggage, and was generally very crowded and uncomfortable. In *An Englishman's Descriptive Account of Dublin*, published by Nathaniel Jefferys in 1810, this vehicle is described as follows:

'This carriage is upon the plan of those *elegant* vehicles, upon low wheels, which are used on the road between Hyde Park Corner and Hammersmith in the neighbourhood of London; and from the state of its repair and external appearance, as well as its internal decoration, it bears every mark of having retired on the superannuated list, from that active duty, previous to its being employed upon its present service. This coach is generally very crowded, from the anxiety of the passengers to proceed to Dublin; and from the manner in which some of the passengers may easily be supposed to have been passing their time on board the packet, from the effect of sea-sickness, the effluvia arising from 12 to

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14 persons so circumstanced crammed together in a very small space, like the inmates of Noah's Ark, *the clean and the unclean*, is not of that description which can at all entitle the Long Coach to be considered as a *bed of roses*. . . . The inconveniences of this ride [he adds] are however but of short duration, for in about half an hour the passengers are released from this earthly purgatory by their arrival in Dublin.'

On 31st May 1806, this coach was stopped in a most daring manner by a gang of robbers, who ordered the passengers to dismount and robbed two of them, Lord Cahir and Mr. George La Touche, of large sums of money. Sir Richard Colt Hoare mentions the incident, which had occurred just before his visit, and makes the following observation: 'When this vehicle is known to convey so many of the principal nobility, gentry, and merchants from Dublin to the packet-boat, a regular horse patrol to attend the coach from the office could be attended with no inconvenience to Government, and would ensure the property of many individuals.'

Carriages called 'jingles', so named from their ringing sound when in motion, could also be hired. They held six persons, who sat sideways and face to face, were four-wheeled, mounted on very high springs, and drawn by a single horse. 'These carriages,' wrote Sir John Carr, 'wretched as they look are very convenient, and persons of the first respectability frequently ride in them.' He might have added that this mode of conveyance was especially popular in Dublin.

Travellers were generally enthusiastic about Killiney Bay, which was compared to that of Naples, but all regarded the squalid village of Ringsend with varying degrees of disgust.

'It is one of the most horrible sinks of filth I ever beheld,' to quote Sir John Carr again; 'every house swarmed with ragged squalid tenantry, and dung and garbage lay in heaps in the passages.' The suburbs of Dublin on this side, which another traveller described as 'waterside excrescences comparable to Rotherhithe and Wapping in London,' certainly do not sound attractive, and those who drove to the city from the Pigeon House by this route cannot have received a favourable first impression of the town they had come to visit.

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Most visitors had heard that the Irish capital ranked as the second city of the Empire, yet few were prepared to see a town of such size and magnificence. 'Dublin is splendid beyond my expectations,' wrote Sir Walter Scott, and Arthur Young and other travellers expressed similar surprise. Nearly all these who published accounts of their visits to Ireland, although critical of much that they saw, write enthusiastically of the capital. 'This appears to be a very magnificent city,' wrote Lockhart to his wife in 1825; 'the streets we came through are like the best of London five or six years ago, and contain a number of public buildings of the finest architecture I have seen anywhere in Great Britain.' 'Dublin may take a high rank among the finest cities of the earth,' wrote Sir John Carr, and he had visited most of the Continental capitals.

A comparison between London and Dublin was often made, and not always to the disadvantage of the latter. 'There is something inexpressibly graceful in the appearance of this town to a stranger,' wrote a visitor in 1810; 'he is forcibly struck with the strong likeness it bears to London, of which it is a beautiful copy—far more beautiful in miniature than the gigantic original—like a watch set in a ring, it charms with its fairy distinctness, its light and airy contructions: the streets are wide and commodious, the houses uniform, lofty and elegant.'

The first desire of most visitors was to view the city from a height in order to enjoy the beauty of its surroundings.¹ The

¹ Visitors also wished to form some idea of the size of the city, which was supposed to be about one-fourth or one-fifth that of London. 'Dublin is equal in magnitude to above one-fourth of London, and is the second city in the British dominions; much about the size of Stockholm, Copenhagen and Berlin: from the Royal Hospital at Kilmainham, the western extremity of the city, to the east end of Lazars-hill, it is two miles and a half long, and its greatest breadth is nearly equal; so that the circumference may be about eight Irish miles.' Pool and Cash, *Views of the City of Dublin* (1780), pp. 6-7. Luckombe observes in his *Tour* (1780): 'The magnitude of the City of Dublin is much greater than is in general imagined, being nearer a fourth than a fifth of that of London; if you view it from any of the towers it seems more, but from walking the streets you would suppose it to be less.' See pp. 138-39 for estimates of the population of Dublin at this time, and note on the population of London at p. 139.

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river running for two miles in an almost straight line through the town, with its five bridges, was then admired—the walk upon the quays being described by one traveller at least as of ‘princely beauty’. Essex Bridge (rebuilt between 1753 and 1755), with its five stone arches, raised footpaths, alcoves, and balustrading, was selected as worthy of notice. By the time of the Union, Carlisle Bridge had been erected; it was lower down the river, and had become the main artery of traffic. It was then fashionable to regard this place as concentrating in one view the finest parts of Dublin. ‘From this bridge,’ wrote Sir John Carr, ‘the passenger has a fine view of the shipping and the Custom House, and from its site the portico of the House of Lords, and the College, present a magnificent appearance and resemble the superb architectural view at the entrance of the Linden Walk, in the beautiful city of Berlin, looking towards the Opera House.’ In 1807, the year after these words were written, William Thomson, the Scottish author, regarded the same scene, of which he writes as follows:

‘So great is the trade and bustle about Dublin, and so often do they cross and re-cross the Liffey, that, besides the new bridge at the upper end of the harbour, which has five others above it, there are several boats at different places, perpetually crossing and re-crossing with passengers, at a half-penny each. The range of shipping being extremely thick, their masts appear like a wood. In winter they come more than a mile into the city, with rows of shops and other buildings along on each side of the quays. Such a sight is extremely pleasing.’

Some complained that Dublin streets and squares lacked neatness and symmetry, but they were generally admired. ‘Many of the streets are very superb,’ writes Sir John Carr; ‘Sackville Street and Westmoreland Street and Cavendish Row may vie with any in London for their size and beauty, and most of the streets in the neighbourhood of Mountjoy Square and Rutland Square in the north, and of St. Stephen’s Green and Merrion Square in the south, are very handsome.’ Merrion Square and Mountjoy Square were equally praised by others, and compared to Portman and Cavendish Squares, while St. Stephen’s Green was regarded as the equal of

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Lincoln's Inn Fields for both size and beauty. After the Union it was remarked, however, that the Green was no longer fashionable. 'It is a fine meadow,' writes Sir John Carr, 'walled and planted with a double row of trees, but is disfigured by a dirty ditch formed on every side, the receptacle of dead cats and dogs. If this square were handsomely railed round and planted,' he adds, 'and the ditch filled up, it would be one of the most magnificent in Europe.' Many of the houses round the Green had also grown shabby and mean in appearance; some of those deserted by their noble owners had been turned into lodgings.

Sackville Street was greatly admired on account of its length, breadth, and fashionable Mall,¹ but post-Union visitors noticed that here also the houses of most of the gentry and nobility had been sold to professional and business people, or converted into offices and shops. Dame Street, even after the Union, was still the focus of fashion, bustle, and business. 'It is of a great width,' wrote Nathaniel Jefferys in 1810, 'and, being filled with elegant shops of various descriptions, forms one of the most accustomed and amusing lounges in the city of Dublin, where from the groups of elegant women continually passing and repassing, and the numerous parties of military officers from the Barracks (*foraging in fruit shops*) it bears a strong resemblance to the London Bond Street.' The shops in Westmoreland Street and Grafton Street were also admired. The last is described in 1825 as being 'well furnished with shops', and forming 'a desirable place of morning perambulation with the fashionable and unoccupied'. The decay of the Liberties and older parts of the city was at this time generally commented upon, and the newer parts of the town to the north and south-east, laid out at the end of the previous century, praised as spacious and well built.

¹ The Mall (1755) in Sackville Street begun by the Right Hon. Luke Gardiner (a rich Dublin banker who bought much land on the north side of Dublin) in 1749 was 800 ft. long by 150 ft broad. There was a coach way on each side of the Mall and a stone wall adorned with obelisks and lamp globes. There is a contemporary print inscribed 'A Perspective View of Sackville St. and Gardiner's Mall', dedicated to Lionel Duke of Dorset, in the National Gallery, Dublin.

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Of the public buildings the Parliament House, which became the Bank of Ireland after the Union, was the most admired. According to Luckombe, the conchologist, who saw it in 1779, it was 'one of the most perfect pieces of architecture in Europe', and Thomas Cromwell, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, writing in 1820, declared, 'No edifice that we recollect in the British metropolis can be compared for simple elegance with this. It is perhaps in this respect the *chef d'œuvre* of our imperial architecture.' Most visitors who watched the structural alterations being carried out by the Bank considered that they took something from the original. 'The Parliament House', wrote Sir John Carr, 'is now undergoing great alterations both externally and internally, in order to be appropriated to the use of a national bank; . . . the intervals between the colonnade or screen on the west side, have been filled up with little or no taste.' The alterations were condemned by others on purely sentimental grounds. John Milner, for instance, the English advocate of Catholic claims, who visited Dublin in 1807, writes of them as follows:

'Nothing could exceed my grief and indignation at seeing the demolition now going on in parts of the new and inimitably beautiful Parliament House under the direction of the Bank of Ireland, which has now got possession of it. Methinks the Irish Parliament before it was guilty of the act of *felo de se* might have provided for the unimpaired preservation of its sumptuous house, as a monument of its own existence, and as some consolation to the citizens of Dublin for their irreparable loss by the legislative union.'

Travellers of the period generally described the Custom House, Four Courts, and Royal Exchange in detail, and naturally devoted most attention to the Custom House. 'I have visited all the principal cities of Europe,' wrote Charles Bowden in 1791, 'but the new Custom House lately built here exceeds infinitely anything of the kind I have seen. Nature seems to have designed Ireland for an emporium of commerce by placing her as a stepping-stone between the old and new world, and if she does not enjoy her local advantages it is not for want of a Custom House, for she has

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one equal to the trade of the whole globe.' Occasionally faults were found with the architecture of Gandon's masterpiece; Sir Richard Colt Hoare, for instance, considered that the upper part of the building was 'too heavy' for 'the lower part of the mouldings', and criticized the figure of Commerce on the dome as 'too massive in its proportions'. He admired the Four Courts as a whole, but made a similar criticism, condemning the over-massive proportions of the dome and colonnade, which he declared tended to 'lessen and injure those of the beautiful portico beneath.'

Other buildings visited were Kilmainham, Dr. Steevens' Hospital, the Blue-coat School, the Lying-in Hospital, the Barracks, and the Foundling Hospital. The private residences of the Duke of Leinster, the Earl of Tyrone, Lord Powerscourt, and Lord Charlemont were greatly admired, but few had the privilege of viewing the interiors, enjoyed for example, by Arthur Young, who came over to Ireland well provided with introductions. Of Lord Charlemont's house in Rutland Square he writes that it was

'equally elegant and convenient, the apartments large, handsome, and well disposed, containing some good pictures, particularly one by Rembrandt of Judas throwing the money on the floor, with a strong expression of guilt and remorse; the whole group fine. In the same room is a portrait of Cæsar Borgia, by Titian. The library is a most elegant apartment of about 40 by 30 feet, and of such a height as to form a pleasing proportion; the light is well managed, coming in from the cove of the ceiling, and has an exceeding good effect; at one end is a pretty ante-room, with a fine copy of the Venus Medici, and at the other two small rooms, one a cabinet of pictures and antiquities, the other medals.'

Young was also invited to Lord Charlemont's villa of Marino at Clontarf, and was shown the small pleasure-house in the grounds known as the Casino. He remarks that it ranked 'very high among the most beautiful edifices I have anywhere seen'. The English farmer was incapable of describing its architectural beauty and elegant decorations in detail, but admired the view from the roof—the harbour crowded with ships and the hills of Wicklow beyond.

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Trinity College was visited chiefly for its magnificent Library, with its rare volumes, curios, and long gallery filled with busts. 'I think [it] infinitely finer than the celebrated one at Upsala in Sweden,' writes Sir John Carr. 'I had the pleasure,' he adds, 'of being attended by the Librarian Dr. John Barrett, one of the most learned men in Ireland.' At least one visitor objected to the vigilance exercised by the Vice-Provost in his official capacity. This was Charles Dupin, a French naval officer and member of the Institute, who wrote of his visit to Trinity College Library in 1818 as follows:

'In the library of the university, which I visited, introduced and conducted by a Doctor belonging to the same university, and which I went over, according to the rules, *not stopping anywhere*, I wished to approach a window from which a tolerably fine prospect was to be enjoyed; but the Doctor, who accompanied me, held me back; in his presence and in that of a door-keeper who did not lose sight of us, there was a possibility of my putting a book in my pocket—there are countries where men are first rendered despicable, in order that a right may afterwards be assumed to treat them as such.'

Dupin did not mention the learned doctor by name, but Miss Anne Plumptre, the traveller and authoress, who had probably had her visit to the library restricted in the same way, related some anecdotes of his well-known miserly behaviour (perhaps by way of revenge) in her *Narrative of a Residence in Ireland*, published in 1817.¹ The following extract from Dr. Barrett's *Minutes of the Library*, dated 9th September 1817, was the last word on the subject:

'I put up in the Library and entered in both catalogues the 46 volumes sent in by Mullens last Saturday, with the exception of Miss Anne Plumptre's *Narrative* which I hope the Board will order to be locked up as too silly and too ill-

¹ Miss Plumptre declares, for example, that Barrett's income as a Fellow was £2,000 a year, of which he scarcely spent £20, excepting on books. 'His penuriousness in other directions is such,' she adds, 'that were not his dinner provided free of expense by the College, he would run the risk of being starved.' For Dr. Barrett see page 135 note ¹.

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mannered for a public library. Hospitably entertained by the good-natured blundering Irish, and introduced (perhaps for the first time) into good company, she takes care to let world [*sic*] know it by publishing all the little tea-table talk they had indulged in to amuse her, and many of whom are probably now blushing at seeing it embodied in a pompous quarto, illustrated with engravings. Travel in savage countries, Miss Anne, and publish their conversations if you can, but spare the feelings of those who are accustomed to the rules and decencies of civilized life.'

'This city possesses few elevated objects to enrich the perspective,' wrote Brewer of Dublin in his *Beauties of Ireland*, published in 1825, 'the steeple of St. George's Church, the tasteless spire of St. Patrick's and the column erected to commemorate the exploits of Admiral Nelson,¹ are the chief objects which shoot above the mass of buildings, and apprise the traveller of his approach to the metropolis of a populous country.' Visitors were not only disappointed by the absence of spires and steeples in Dublin, but often criticized the architecture of the cathedrals. Of St. Patrick's Thomas Cromwell wrote that it was 'inferior in almost every respect to the numerous remains of Gothic architecture in England,' while Christ Church is described by another visitor as 'a small unsightly old building with a low square tower, the whole very much out of repair'. The choral services in both churches however, were much appreciated. Of that of Christ Church, a visitor remarked in 1826, 'I never heard better music either at St. Paul's or Westminster.'

The fact that these two important churches were situated in the most filthy and squalid parts of the city was universally deplored.² Nathaniel Jefferys wrote in 1810:

¹ Nelson's Pillar, which still adorns Sackville Street, Dublin, was erected (1808) under the superintendence of Mr. Baker, a master stone-mason who had been employed at the new Custom House. The statue on top was the work of Thomas Kirk, R.H.A. Several English travellers of this period criticized the situation of this striking column. One would have placed it on Howth Head to be a beacon to seamen; another thought it would have been more effective on higher ground in Mountjoy Square.

² Sir John Carr says of this neighbourhood that it had 'more mud, rags and wretchedness than London can exhibit in its most miserable quarters.'

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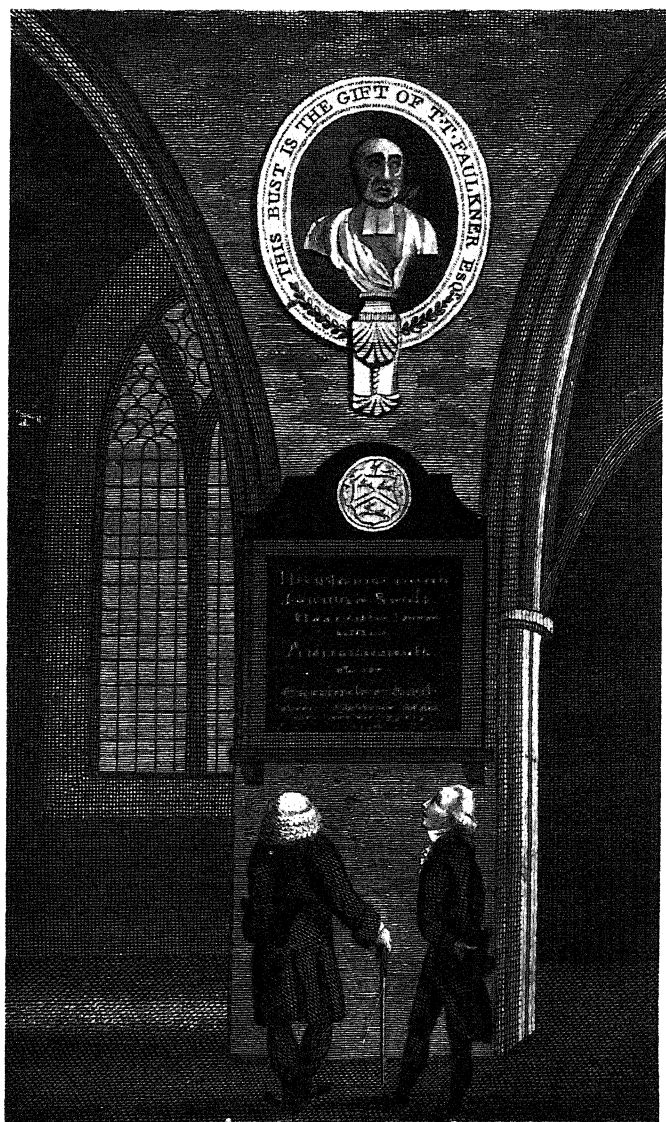
'There are two cathedral churches in Dublin, but neither of them partake in any degree of that Gothic magnificence of architecture which so eminently distinguishes the cathedral churches in England. . . . Both are placed in such narrow, dirty, and obscure parts of the town that their founders may be supposed to have been influenced in their choice of such inconvenient situations from a pious regard to what was said by the great Founder of our religion of the road to Heaven, that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way".'

Post-Union visitors were disappointed that the old Deanery where Swift had lived had disappeared (it had been burned down in 1781), and that the palace of the Archbishops of Dublin had been converted into a barracks. When Scott visited Dublin he had already published his monumental edition of Swift, but he wanted to get additional light on his history. Lockhart tells us that he hung for a long time over his monument in St. Patrick's, admiring the inscription and bust.¹ After their visit to the cathedral they received 'a courteous and elegant reception' from the Dean, who entertained them to a 'capital luncheon . . . the original full-length portrait of *the* Dean over the sideboard'. After that they visited the library, close by, which had been founded by Marsh, Archbishop of Dublin, in 1701, and here they were shown a folio of Clarendon with marginal notes and comments by Swift, which were 'mostly in pencil but still quite legible'.²

Scott also visited the Library and Museum of the Royal Dublin Society, where he was on the look-out for Irish antiquities. According to the *Dublin Morning Register* of 18th July 1825, which gives an account of his visit, 'Was this found in Ireland?' was a question often heard as Sir Walter passed among the 'curiosities'. According to another Irish journal, Scott visited the book-stalls along the quays in search of Irish books, and called at Mr. Milliken's book-

¹ This bust of Swift is by Patrick Cunningham, the Irish sculptor. It was presented to the Cathedral by the nephew of George Faulkner, the publisher of Swift.

² Marsh's Library is described by Lockhart as 'a monastic-looking place, very like one of the smaller libraries at Oxford.'



MONUMENT OF DEAN SWIFT IN ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL

From Walker's *Hibernian Magazine*, June 1802



AN IRISH NODDY, 1785
From an aquatint by John Nixon

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shop in Grafton Street, where he 'expended upwards of sixty pounds in the purchase of books relating solely to the history and antiquities of this country'.

Every English visitor had heard of the Castle, the headquarters of the Viceroy, and nearly all were disappointed with its appearance. One refers to it as 'a dark, dreary and dismal abode', and pities the English noblemen who had to live there and leave such beautiful seats in England as Goodwood, Wentworth, and Stowe. John Gamble, an army surgeon, wrote in 1810:

'Though Dublin Castle is pretty, and even magnificent in some of its parts, it is deficient as a whole; it has no uniformity of plan, and as it is so scattered that the eye can take little of it in at once, it has no dignity of appearance—it bears too evident marks of the various repairs it has undergone, and, like Sir John Cutler's worsted stockings, so often darned with black silk, that they changed their original nature, it has lost all traces of its venerable origin in the grotesque embellishments of modern art.'

All were not absolutely of this opinion, and the new Chapel, built between 1807 and 1814 in Gothic style, was generally admired.¹ Miss Plumptre, for example, refers to it enthusiastically as 'a beautiful specimen of modern taste and industry'.

The Phoenix Park was generally admired for its thickets, thorns, and variegated prospects, and considered not inferior to Hyde Park and St. James's Park, but some thought that the lack of lofty and spreading trees took something from its beauty and richness. Lord Chesterfield's column, with the inscription at the base relating in Latin how he had embellished the Park at his own expense for the recreation of the citizens of Dublin, attracted general interest.

No one admired the Dublin suburbs, many of which contained, in the words of an Englishman writing in the *Hibernian Magazine* of 1781, 'Low and beggarly cabins thatched with straw, inhabited by creatures clad in rags and covered

¹ The Castle Chapel (1807-14) was designed by the Irish architect Francis Johnston.

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with filth,¹ but many country and seaside places in the immediate neighbourhood of the city were considered pretty and agreeable. Sir John Carr, for example, describes Blackrock as follows: 'It is fitted with the most elegant country houses, gardens and plantations, more numerous and far more beautiful and picturesque than the villas of Clapham Common to which it may in some respects be compared.'

Carr paid a visit to Grattan, whom he calls 'one of the greatest orators and politicians of the age', at Tinnahinch, his seat in County Wicklow, and also called on Lord Powerscourt, regretting that he was unable to accept an invitation to stay with his lordship. Others inspected (if only from the outside) Carton, the residence of the Duke of Leinster in County Kildare, and Mr. Conolly's seat at Castletown in the same neighbourhood. The last is described by a traveller in 1791 as 'the most superb private house in His Majesty's dominion'.

The following bird's-eye view of Dublin and its surroundings is given by Thomas Reid, the naval surgeon, in his *Travels in Ireland*, published in 1823:

'Went to the packet-office, engaged a passage in the steam-packet *Mountaineer*, and employed the interval till her sailing in viewing the city of Dublin and its environs. In the course of this excursion, I sauntered over the Hill of Killiney, an elevated gigantic range, which forms the north-eastern termination of the Dublin Mountains, and from which a stranger is presented with a choice of admirable prospects. . . . Eastward, the eye embraces Killiney Bay, lying within the bosom of the hill just mentioned, the little town of Bray upon the shore, with the Sugar Loaf beyond, the tapering elevation of which is a pleasing and unique among the irregular group of the Wicklow mountains. Turning round, the grandeur of the scene spreads in boundless association of

¹ Luckombe refers in his *Tour* (1780) to the miserable condition of the poor who lived in thatched houses of mud on the outskirts of Dublin, having no shoes or stockings, and living on milk and potatoes. Jefferys, in 1810, speaks of 'mean and dirty huts with every appearance of misery and want in their wretched tenements [which] discredit the avenues, in all directions, to this great city.'

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beautiful objects, uniting the charms of nature with those elegancies and comforts of life which result from commercial wealth and civilization. At your foot, the island and little town of Dalkey, with the busy scene of the quarries for supplying the works at the new harbour of Kingstown, formerly Dunleary, which gives the idea of full security to the shipping in the Bay, some at anchor, others moving into port, or passing outwards to their various destinations. Beyond the Bay the promontory of Howth, over the neck of which are seen the cultivated hills of Louth, terminated by the irregular sky-line of the Mountains of Mourne. Turning again towards the west, the city spreads her smoking extent over many a mile, diversified with steeples, squares, monuments, and other architectural beauties—the rich plains of Kildare in the distance—the whole constituting perhaps one of the most magnificent views in the world. The picture becomes finished with the space between the city and the observer, luxuriantly cultivated, and thickly set with innumerable country seats, rivalling each other in taste and decoration, whilst the huge mass of granite, called the Dublin Mountains, shelters these charming retreats of civic opulence from the rude visitation of the southerly storms. This variously-chequered, grand, and delightful scene cannot fail to fill the mind with the most pleasing images, notwithstanding the miseries that brood upon the land.’

Visitors to Ireland were generally impressed by the poverty of the country, as compared to the prosperity of the towns; and were not a little shocked by the contrast between rich and poor that was especially noticeable in Dublin.

The Rev. John Milner, the Vicar Apostolic of the Western District of England, wrote to a friend in his own country on 6th July 1807, as follows:

‘Being returned to Dublin, I have had an opportunity of viewing the public buildings which adorn it, the Custom House, the Parliament House, the Four Courts, the Exchange, the Lying-in Hospital, the Bridges, the Quays, Trinity College, and the Castle. The chief objections I have to these buildings in general, with the exception of the Castle and Trinity College, is, that their magnificence is

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disproportioned to the appearance of the city in other respects, and to the circumstances of the people at whose expense they have been erected; in the same manner as the statue of Commerce at the top of the first mentioned of these erections is too colossal even for the elevated situation which it holds, and appears, at that distance from the eye, to represent a Brobdingnagian female.'

'From everything I saw,' Arthur Young had written earlier, 'I was struck with those appearances of wealth which the capital of a thriving community may be supposed to exhibit. Happy if I find through the country in diffused prosperity the right source of this splendour!'¹

Considering the size and importance of Dublin in the eighteenth century, it seems extraordinary that there should have been so few inns. 'There is not absolutely one good inn in the town,' wrote the author of the *Hibernia Curiosa*, 'not one upon my honour, in which an Englishman of any sense of decency would be satisfied with his quarters, and not above two or three in the whole city that he could bear to be in.' Private lodgings were very expensive, and not very remarkable for cleanliness.² 'I haven't told you,' wrote Lady Carlow to her sister Lady Louisa Stuart on 16th November 1781, 'we have at last got a house here, and a sad dirty one it is, but we are obliged to put up with it, for there are no lodgings of any kind to be got. I am out of all patience with the slovenliness and dirt of the people in Ireland, and I have just been hiring a housemaid who is an Englishwoman, in hopes of getting my house kept clean.'

Lady Carlow may have been rather particular, but here is

¹ Arthur Young in his *Tour of Ireland* (ed. 1892), Vol. I, pp. 19-20, remarks however of Dublin that 'good lodgings [are] almost as dear as they are in London: tho' we were well accommodated (dirt excepted) for two guineas and an half a week.' 'All the lower ranks in this city,' he adds, 'have no idea of English cleanliness, either in apartments, persons or cookery.'

² Lady Morgan in her *Memoirs* (1862), Vol. I, p. 68, tells us that her mother (daughter of Sir Rowland Hill of Shrewsbury) a Saxon, and 'an enemy of all slovenliness in habits, conduct, or mind' was 'disgusted with the dirty Dublin houses of that day, though in ostentatious finery they far surpassed anything she had ever seen in the old picturesque houses of Shrewsbury.'

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the testimony of John Gamble, the Irish army surgeon, who had lived in England:

'The *savoir vivre* is but moderately advanced in Dublin, there are none of those comfortable eating-houses in which London so much abounds, where one often meets rational and agreeable society, and has a good dinner at a reasonable price; . . . the taverns in Dublin are either so miserably low, that a respectable person cannot be seen going into them, or are equally extravagant with the most expensive London ones—the lodging houses, with some exceptions, . . . are liable to the same objection—they are either barracks, which the mop seems never to have visited, or beyond all reason extravagant.'

After the Union, as the result, one supposes, of the increased number of visitors, matters seem, however, to have improved, for several travellers speak well of the hotels. 'Dublin abounds in excellent hotels,' wrote Sir Richard Colt Hoare in 1807, 'and no street more than Kildare Street; there are also others very good in Sackville Street.' In the summer of 1825 four representative of the Irish Society of London came over to Ireland to inspect their property in the North, and, passing through Dublin, put up at Morrison's, in Dawson Street. Gilpin Gorst, the Deputy-Governor, gives the following account of their quarters:

'We went to Morrison's in Dawson Street, where we found good bedrooms, and a sitting room upwards of 30 feet long, and fronting the north, a most desirable aspect in the hot weather: and it also commanded a view of the extensive gardens of Trinity College. After taking possession, and seeing the luggage disposed of in our different apartments, we dressed, and sat down to dinner at five. A facetious looking waiter, asked what Wine we would "plase" to drink, and as we did not immediately make up our minds, he said: "Well Gentlemen, I will be putting on a bottle of Sherry and another of Sauterne, and then you'll just be thinking about what you'll be having besides." The salmon was very crisp and good, but the soles tasted of the hot weather. The potatoes, as might have been expected here, were admirable;

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but the *griddled* ones, which were ordered by that refined epicure Mr. Schultes, were delicious, and it was resolved *nem. com.* that griddled potatoes be a standing dish, during our abode in Dublin. Mr. Morrison's cellar must be a very good one, for the Sauterne was as cool as if it had been iced. The Sherry too tasted well after the fish, and the Champagne was as good as the rest; so we began to think that we had fallen into very good quarters. We questioned Luke the waiter about the water, who said it was the finest in the world, but he did not trouble it much, though it was *blessed* water, for it was St. Patrick's own well that was in the very house. After dinner we wrote home to announce our safe arrival, and having travelled all the preceding night, we went early to bed.'

On leaving Dublin Gorst wrote a letter to Morrison in the name of the deputation, expressing their thanks for his attentions, and for the good fare his house had afforded them.

Strangers enjoyed their walks though the newer and quieter parts of Dublin, but in the older and busier thoroughfares complained of the recklessness of the driving and the dirtiness of the streets. 'Except the few new streets which are paved and flagged like those of London, the whole of it [Dublin] is abominably dirty and slippery,' wrote Philip Luckombe in 1779, while the lack of consideration shown to pedestrians by hackney coachmen and others was proverbial. When Charles Bowden was in Dublin in 1790 he saw a poor man run over in College Street by a horse and car, 'which driving forcibly by mangled him in a most shocking manner.' In the *Hibernian Magazine* of 1777 we read that coaches were often actually overturned by the heaps of dirt that had been allowed to accumulate in the streets, while in the same journal for June 1789 occurs the following paragraph: 'The multiplicity of dreadful accidents that have occurred within the last ten days through the wantonness, drunkenness, or carelessness of the drivers of cars and carts, renders this nuisance of the most alarming nature. Not less than ten persons in this city and its vicinity have had their limbs fractured, and been otherwise dangerously contused and mangled by their being over-run by cars and carts.'

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The 'noddy', so called from its oscillating movement, was, like the 'jingle', a characteristic of Dublin streets. It was a low, single, two-wheeled horse chaise, capable of holding two persons, drawn by one horse, with a seat for the driver on the shafts. Luckombe remarks that these vehicles were 'so insufferably crazy, and even dangerous, as to afford matter of surprise that they are permitted to be used.' The author of the *Hibernia Curiosa* wrote of them in more detail as follows:

'The rates of hackney-coaches and sedans, are established here as in London, for the different distances, or set-downs, as they are called. But they have an odd kind of hacknies here that is called the Noddy, which is nothing more than an old cast-off one-horse chaise or chair, with a kind of stool fixed upon the shafts just before the seat, on which the driver sits, just over the rump of his horse, and drives you from one part of the town to another at stated rates for a set-down; and a damned set-down it is sometimes, for you are well off if you are not set down in a kennel [gutter] by the breaking of the wheels, or an overset-down, nor can you see anything before you but your nod—nod—nodding charioteer, whose situation on the shafts obliges his motion to be conformed to that of the horse, from whence, I suppose, they have obtained the name of the Noddy. I assure you, the ease of the fare is not much consulted in the construction of these nodding vehicles. However [he adds], they are convenient for single persons, the fare being not more than half that of a coach.'

For parties of pleasure the 'chaise-marine' was used. This was a simple kind of carriage, or rather cart, with block wheels. The occupants sat on a mat spread over the cart, with their feet dangling about six inches from the ground. 'Ten or a dozen,' says the author of the *Hibernia Curiosa*, 'will take one of these chaise-marines, and ride in it by turns, the rate being seldom, in such cases, more than footpace. . . . I assure you,' he adds, 'they are the drollest, merriest curricles you ever saw.' In 1771 the number of hackney-coaches, landaus, chariots, post-chaises, and Berlins licensed to ply in Dublin was 300. There were 400 sedan chairs.

'Before I conclude with Dublin,' says Arthur Young, 'I shall only remark that walking in the streets there, from the

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narrowness and populousness of the principal thoroughfares, as well as from the dirt and wretchedness of the canaille, is a most disgusting and uneasy exercise.' Dublin, despite the efforts of the House of Industry, was still filled with beggars when Bowden was in the city in 1790. He describes them as 'the most abject I have ever seen; those of Madrid,' he remarks, 'are not more naked, nor those of Paris more miserable looking spectacles.' Ten years after the Union another visitor, Nathaniel Jefferys, wrote of one of the poorer quarters of Dublin as follows:

'Returning from the Phoenix Park by the Barracks, the road leads through Barrack Street; and of the charms of this delightful spot, they, and they only, who have had the pleasure of passing through St. Giles in London, or Rag Fair upon Tower Hill, can form an adequate idea of the ragged, wretched, and miserable appearance of its inhabitants, which actually bids defiance to description, and more forcibly brought to my recollection the well-known observation of Mr. Foote (the celebrated dramatic writer and comedian), who said, that "till he had seen the beggars in Dublin, he could never imagine what the beggars in London did with their cast-off cloaths".'

Lord Blayney,¹ the distinguished soldier, who served in Ireland for a time during the Rebellion of 1798, considered that the British authorities were to blame for refusing travelling passes to the women and children of troops about to leave the country. 'You will see each regiment accompanied to the shore,' he writes, 'such is the custom of the country, with nearly as many women as men; and these with large families of children follow the regiments to the very place of embarkation, where the boat leaves them to lament and bewail their destitute situation.' Charity sermons in his opinion were not enough, for 'the same box which receives

¹ Andrew Thomas Blayney, eleventh Baron Blayney (1770-1834), was major in the 89th Regiment, part of which he raised in Ireland in 1794. He served under the Duke of York in Flanders, 1794-5, and was Lieutenant-Colonel of the 89th Regiment in Ireland in 1798. He was Major-General in the Peninsula in 1810 and was captured at Malaga and imprisoned in France. He wrote an interesting account of his captivity.

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the ample donation of the charitable conceals the niggardliness of the selfish'. Better to have a rate for the relief and maintenance of the poor, which should be levied on all persons in proportion to their means, as in England. At the very end of the Georgian period the lack of a regular Poor Law for the relief of the poor was universally deplored; the beggars had increased, and there seemed no other way out of the difficulty. In 1824 an American citizen, Andrew Bigelow, of Medford, Massachusetts, published a book entitled *Leaves from a Journal; or Sketches of Rambles in North Britain and Ireland* in which occurs the following paragraph:

'Nothing short of actual vision can convey to an American a just conception of the apparent misery of this class of people in Ireland. In Dublin mendicants swarm the streets in every direction, and assail the passenger with an importunity which cannot, or will not, be repulsed. In the more frequented quarter of the city, one of these wretched objects is seen lying upon the door-steps of almost every respectable dwelling. Families are literally *strewn* along the principal streets, at intervals of a few yards, clothed with fragments of garments which gave me the first distinct notion of tatters. . . . Mendicity in my opinion has reached its "ne plus ultra" in this city.'

John Gamble wrote in 1810:

'The address of an Irish beggar is much more poetical and animated than that of an English one; his phraseology is as peculiar as the recitative in which it is delivered; he conjures you, for the love and honour of God, to throw something to the poor famished sinner—by your father and mother's soul to cast an eye of pity on his sufferings—he is equally liberal in his good wishes, whether you give him anything or not; "may you live a hundred years—may you pass unhurt through fire and water—may the gates of Paradise be ever open to receive you"; are common modes of expression, which he utters with a volubility that is inconceivable.'

The language used by Dublin beggars was not always so

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agreeable; it served, however, to shock and amuse the cross-channel visitor by turns.

'Many of the low people in Dublin are abandoned in the extreme [wrote William Thomson in 1807]; I heard some women in the streets swearing by the living Jesus, by the Holy Paul, by the Blood of the Holy Ghost and the like. One of them after cursing another, and praying that the devil might hunt her soul, all of a sudden added, "Arrah, come honey, though you were at Kilkenny and I at Dublin, by the Holy Cross I would speak well of you." The other replied: "Get you gone; I was a lady when your skin in many places appeared through your clothes."'

Strangers who were admitted into the higher ranks of Dublin society noticed that the upper classes were much the same as those of England.¹ 'Let me conclude what I have to observe on the conduct of the principal people residing in Ireland,' wrote Arthur Young, 'that there are great numbers among them who are as liberal in all their ideas as any people in Europe.'

The same author writes:

'There is a very good society in Dublin in a Parliament winter; a great round of dinners and parties, and balls and suppers every night in the week. . . . They have two assemblies on the plan of those of London, in Fishamble Street, and at the Rotunda, and two gentlemen's clubs. Anthry's and Dalys,' both very well regulated: I heard some anecdotes of deep play at the latter, though never to the excess common at London. . . . The style of living may be guessed from the fortunes of the resident nobility and great commoners; there are about thirty that possess incomes from seven to twenty thousand pounds a year. . . . The tables of people of fortune are very plentifully spread; many elegantly, differing in nothing from those of England. Claret is the common wine of all tables, and so much inferior to what is drunk in England, that it does not appear to be the same

¹ Sir John Carr, for example, remarks: "The tables of the Irish do not differ from ours: the same abundance, style of cookery, order and elegance prevail." *The Stranger in Ireland* (1806), p. 232.

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wine; but their port is incomparable, so much better than the English, as to prove, if proof was wanting, the abominable adulterations it must undergo with us.'

He goes on:

'Drinking and duelling are two charges which have long been alleged against the gentlemen of Ireland, but the change of manners which has taken place in that Kingdom is not generally known in England. Drunkenness ought no longer to be a reproach, for at every table I was at in Ireland I saw a perfect freedom reign, every person drank just as little as they pleased, nor have I ever been asked to drink a single glass more than I had an inclination for; I may go further and assert that hard drinking is very rare among people of fortune. Duelling was once carried to an excess, which was a real reproach and scandal to the Kingdom; it of course proceeded from excessive drinking; as the cause has disappeared, the effect has nearly followed; not however entirely, for it is yet far more common among people of fashion than in England.'

Bowden remarked when in Dublin in 1790 that duelling there was 'much more prevalent than in any other city I ever visited', and that 'several deaths from duels were recorded every week in the newspapers'. 'The practice of duelling', said Sir John Carr, 'is subsiding, but Truth compels me to say that it has still too wide a latitude of action.' Luckombe bears out Young's testimony that drinking among the upper classes had diminished: 'the bottle is circulated freely,' he wrote, 'but not to that excess we have heard it was'. But spirits were cheap, and drunkenness was prevalent among the lower classes up to the end of the period. 'The excessive use of whisky in Dublin', wrote Sir John Carr, 'cannot fail of attracting the attention of a stranger, . . . the number of shops where this liquid poison and other drams . . . are sold is shockingly great. In Thomas Street every other house seems to be a dram-shop.' 'Though there are many, very many pious well-behaved people of both sexes in this city,' wrote William Thomson in 1807, 'yet I never saw so many drunken women as in Dublin. Many of

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the mechanics' wives and others of the lower classes, when they can get it, will drink, without being much intoxicated, 3 or 4 noggins, or half-pints of whisky *per day*. Many of the people who have not decent clothes to appear in on Sunday, work all that day, and then drink on Monday and Tuesday, or till all their money be gone.'

Luckombe and others speak of the hospitality of the merchants of Dublin, but think that they were too extravagant. 'Luxury is making prodigious strides in this metropolis,' wrote Bowden in 1791; 'in truth it is more discernible here than in London, as the scene is comprehended in a smaller circle.' Bowden, of whom we know little,¹ but who appears in the frontispiece of his *Tour* as a military-looking gentleman in a cocked hat, reveals in his preface that he has much sympathy with the Irish, and was for giving them complete commercial equality. When in Dublin he made a special point of visiting merchants and inspecting various manufactories. 'The brewers of Dublin', he writes, 'are in general most respectable characters. I dined with the most eminent of them—a Mr. Farrell of Merrion Square, and was never more elegantly entertained in my life. He introduced me to his brother-in-law, Mr. Byrne, also a very eminent brewer. These gentlemen [he adds] are both held in the highest estimation by all ranks for the most exalted virtues.' Bowden also visited Mr. Slator's paper mills at Chapelizod and Saggart, of which he remarks that 'candour obliges me to observe that I have not seen more judicious arrangements in the mills of England or Holland.' He also visited the glass manufactory of Mr. Kennedy, of Stephen Street. 'I will confess,' he says, 'I did not expect to meet in this island such models of refined taste and accurate execution.' He evidently heard something from employers of labour in Dublin of the evils of workmen's combinations, for he remarks, 'The trade in this city is greatly impeded by com-

¹ Charles Topham Bowden appears, from what he says in his 'Irish Tour', to have been a friend of the Earl of Chesterfield and Lord Paget, and to have lived in London. He states that he had 'visited all the principal cities of Europe' (*A Tour through Ireland* (1791), p. 5). He goes on to say that everyone in Dublin, and even middle-class people, seemed to keep a carriage; and he heard that people of fortune mostly 'lived beyond their means'.

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binations among the working artisans; which is particularly injurious at a time that commercial enterprise is beginning to diffuse.'

The inferior quality of the Irish currency and the want of specie in Dublin about the time of the Union have already been referred to as acting as a serious drag upon Irish trade and industry.¹ The guide-books of the time print tables showing the unfavourable state of the exchanges as between England and Ireland, and at least one English visitor tells of the inconvenience caused to the tourist by monetary disturbances. This was Sir John Carr, who declared that the production of a guinea in many parts of Ireland at the time of his visit would have excited as much curiosity as the display of a 'ruble or a sicca rupee'. 'Many of the base shillings in circulation', he adds, 'are not intrinsically worth 4d., but if they are of sufficient weight, or what is admitted to be so by tacit consent, and do not present too brazen an appearance of their felonious origin, they are permitted to descend into the till, to prevent a total stagnation of trade.' When he went into a Dublin shop to buy gloves the shopkeeper weighed his shillings and found them deficient. On another occasion, when he had selected some article for purchase, the shopkeeper had no change, and when the neighbourhood had been searched fruitlessly for over half an hour the coveted article had to resume its former place on the shelf. He rightly put down the fact that Bank of Ireland notes could not be exchanged against Bank of England bills, except at a discount, to the excessive use of paper in Ireland, and the scarcity of coin to 'the drain of gold' by the absentees after the Union and to the disturbances of 'the late rebellion'. Carr foreshadowed later reforms when he makes the suggestion that as Ireland was now 'incorporated' with the British Empire 'a universal assimilation of the coin' should take place.

Dr. Johnson's remark that Dublin was only 'a worse capital' was true in the sense that dress, fashions, and diversions among people of quality were copied from those

¹ See Joseph Johnston, 'Irish Currency in the Eighteenth Century.' *Hermathena* (November 1938).

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in vogue in London.¹ 'Every one as far as their circumstances will admit seems to take the utmost pleasure in imitating the customs and manners of the English,' wrote Edward Lloyd, the English silk-weaver, whose account of Dublin was published in 1732. As the eighteenth century wore on the process of Anglicization naturally grew more pronounced until it was jokingly said that an Irish gentleman was almost as good as an English one. The author of the *Hibernia Curiosa* remarks that the 'nobility and people of quality in or rather of this Kingdom are to all intents and purposes almost very Londoners,' but he notices that many of 'the middling class of gentry' as well as 'people in trade' had 'the ridiculous vanity' of pretending to speak better English than the people of London, and even considered that 'their gentility as much exceeds that of London as their pronunciation.'

Thomas Cromwell, the English Dissenting minister, in 1820 wrote:

'An idea is very prevalent among the inhabitants [of Dublin] that the English language is spoken in greater purity in their city than in any other throughout the British Empire. An opinion this, at which the travelled Englishman, whose recollection probably will furnish him with an instance of the same harmless nationality in the good citizens of Edinburgh, must be constrained to smile; while perhaps he will recollect *Love à la Mode* (Charles Macklin, the author of this comedy, was a native of Dublin) and Sir Archy MacSarcasm and Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan,² neither of whom "had the brogue". An affectation of everything English and a capricious disposition to admire whatever may be in momentary vogue on our side of the Channel [he adds] are common foibles with the Irish; of little consequence, it

¹ John Bush, the author of the *Hibernia Curiosa* (1769), remarks: "Their [i.e. the inhabitants of Dublin] dress, fashions and diversions are taken from them [the English], and whoever shall carry over any species of popular entertainment from London, will be sure to meet with encouragement." (P. 14.)

² From this character developed the 'Stage Irishman'. See the chapter on 'The Georgian Drama' in the *Cambridge History of English Literature* (1914), Vol. XI.

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may be, in themselves, did they not sometimes lead to illiberal jealousy of native merit and talent, however worthy of distinction and patronage. A jealousy of England itself, we may observe, is often incongruously united to this tacit acknowledgment of the superiority of the sister country.'

That vanity was a characteristic of the citizens of Dublin during the Georgian period is attested not only by English visitors, but by some of those Irishmen who returned to visit their native country after residence in England or abroad.

John Gamble wrote in 1810:

'Vanity seems the prominent feature of every inhabitant of Dublin; he is vain of himself, vain of his city, of its beauty, of the splendour of its public buildings, and of its vast superiority over London in this respect. Doubtless [he adds] he is deserving of praise, which he would get more readily if he did not demand it so imperiously—the difference between a citizen of London and Dublin seems to be this—the latter is vain, and the former is proud; he has a lofty opinion of his country and himself; he never dreams that this can be disputed; and, satisfied with it himself, is indifferent even if it should. The latter is not so assured of a ready acquiescence to his claims, either for his city or himself—perhaps he is not so well assured of them himself; nor if he was, could he exist so well on his own resources.'¹

The criticisms passed by visitors on Irish manners and customs were generally taken by the Irish in good part, but there was one English traveller whose observations were so impertinent that he gave universal offence. This was Mr. Richard Twiss. Twiss was the son of an English merchant resident in Holland, and uncle of Horace Twiss, the politician and wit. He had plenty of means, and used them chiefly to travel upon the Continent. He visited Holland, Belgium,

¹ Gamble has other unflattering things to say about Dubliners; for example, he speaks of their 'insatiable curiosity. The stranger 'watched by eyes more numerous and wakeful than those of Argus' finds little privacy, and has continually to be 'on his good behaviour', an advantage 'as far as morality is concerned', he points out, but inconvenient in 'various minor matters of economy'. (Gamble, *Sketches* 1811, p. 75.)

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France, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Bohemia, Spain, and Portugal, and was in Paris during the Terror. He came over to Ireland in 1775, spent some months there, and published his impressions of the country in 1776.¹ He was a well-educated man, and was interested in many things—art, literature, gardening, and chess.

Twiss discovered a 'certain confusion of thought' among those Irish whom he met on his travels. 'The second answer to a question,' he observes, 'usually annihilated the information supposed to be acquired by a first.' This was not surprising, he thought, for the people had had little time for the improvement of their minds, having so lately emerged out of a state of dissension and party broils.

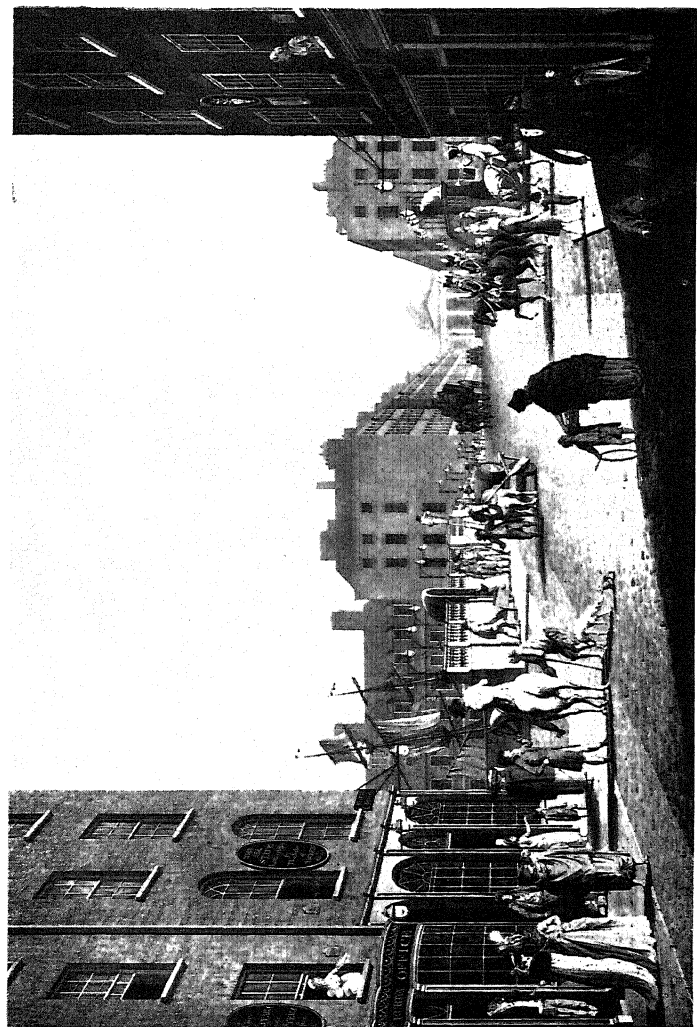
Of the Dublin newspapers he observed that they were 'curiosities by reason of their style and spelling'. He also noted that 'the orthography of the inscriptions on the signs, and of the names at the corners of the streets, is equally faulty, but might more easily be corrected'. Other offensive remarks related to the Irish fondness for potatoes and to some physical characteristics of the women.

Shortly after his visit a Dublin manufacturer of earthenware had the idea of having the offender's portrait printed upon the bottom of his chamber-pots. For these wares the Lord Chancellor's wife, Lady Clare, is said to have composed the following motto:

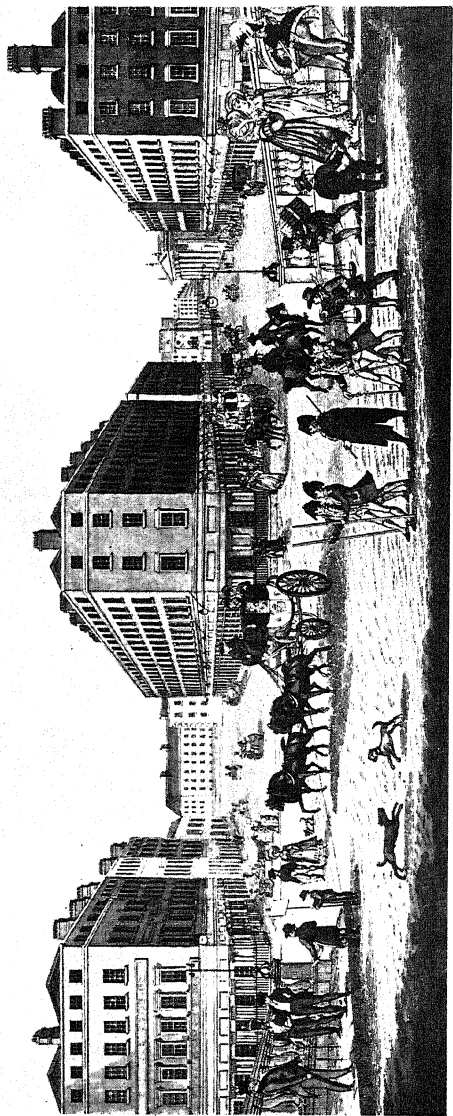
*Here you may behold a liar,
Well deserving of hell-fire:
Every one who likes may p——
Upon the learned Doctor T——.*

This verse, which may offend the taste of some modern reader, is hardly worth quoting but for the fact that it illustrates the aristocratic humour of the time. When De La Tocnaye, the young French *émigré*, was in Dublin in 1796, he was shown one of these interesting instruments of

¹ There is a detailed account of Dr. Richard Twiss, and his Irish visit, together with a portrait, in the *Hibernian Magazine* for August 1776, pp. 550–53. His *Tour in Ireland* is reviewed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for September 1776, p. 420. Fanny Burney gives a lively account of this English eccentric in her *Early Diary*, Vol. I, pp. 279–94.



CAPEL STREET, WITH THE ROYAL EXCHANGE IN THE DISTANCE, 1800
From James Malton's *Picturesque and Descriptive View of the City of Dublin* (1792-99)



VIEW FROM CARLISLE BRIDGE, DUBLIN
From an engraving by S. F. and H. Brocas (1820)

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revenge. 'Tis rather a comical situation for a professed traveller,' he observes, but adds that Twiss was probably consoled by the sale of his work, which, 'though worth very little, sold so well, that I could hardly get a copy of it in Dublin.'

'The inhabitants in general of this Kingdom (of Ireland),' wrote the author of the *Hibernia Curiosa*, 'are very far from being what they have too often and unjustly been represented by those of our country who never saw them—a nation of wild Irish: since I have been in Ireland I have traversed from north to south and from west to east, the three provinces of Ulster, Leinster and Munster, and generally found them civil and obliging, even amongst the very lowest class of the natives.' 'In little more than two months I made the Tour of Ireland—the most romantic island in the world,' wrote Bowden, 'and experienced every gratification a speculative mind could wish for; . . . the common people are far removed from that semi-barbarous state, which is the general opinion on the other side of the water.'¹

Bowden had condemned that 'power and spirit of monopoly which have enabled the English to extend their views, and to rise many years before the Irish,' and there were many who shared his opinion. A sympathy with Ireland was very commonly expressed by those English travellers who have written accounts of their visits to the country during the

¹ Bowden had obviously much sympathy with the Irish. He describes in his *Tour* (1791) how the rustic songs of the peasants at work gave him more pleasure than anything he had ever heard at Vauxhall. In a letter of Swift, written to Sir Charles Wogan on 2nd August 1732 (Swift's *Correspondence* IV, 328), he says: 'I do assert that from several experiments I have made in travelling over both kingdoms, I have found the poor cottagers here, who could speak our language, to have a much better natural taste for good sense, humour, and raillery, than ever I observed among people of the like sort in England. But the million of oppressions they lie under, the tyranny of their landlords, the ridiculous zeal of their priests, and the general misery of the whole nation, have been enough to damp the best spirits under the sun.' And Wesley wrote to his friend Ebenezer Blackwell in 1747 on his first visit to Ireland: 'For natural sweetness of temper, for courtesy and hospitality, I have never seen any people like the Irish. Indeed, all I converse with are only English transplanted into another soil; and they are much mended by the removal, having left all their roughness and surliness behind them.' (*Letters*, II, 109-10.)

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signs of the Georges. And these were of all types, from scientific observers such as Arthur Young, who was loud in his condemnation of the Penal Laws and the land system, to sentimental persons such as Anne Plumptre, who writes eloquently if superficially of Irish grievances.

Much of the ignorance that prevailed in England with regard to Ireland and her people was probably due to the fact that the country was looked on as one, while in fact it contained a perplexing variety, based on locality, race, and religion. It was only natural, perhaps, that the mass of the people, with their Gaelic peculiarities, should present some difficulty to Anglo-Saxon inquirers, but the Anglo-Irish element was almost equally misunderstood. In view of the exhausted state of the country another rebellion of the magnitude of '98 was not likely to follow immediately. Grattan and his followers knew their adopted country and had shown signs of statesmanship. Instead of sacrificing the political and social importance of her colonists as she did at the Union England would have done more to solve the Irish problem by leaving them to take the situation in hand and make their own terms with the Irish people. When the fear of French invasion had passed the religious prejudice and political bigotry of the upper class (already undermined by eighteenth-century Liberalism) would have gradually disappeared as they did in England; while the best of the Ascendancy traditions would have been preserved to enrich the life of the nation.

'They tell me the city is desolate, of which I can see no appearance, but the deprivation caused by the retreat of the most noble and most opulent inhabitants must be felt in a manner a stranger cannot conceive.' So wrote Scott to Maria Edgeworth from Dublin on 18th July 1825. Sir Walter proceeded to quote from Stephano's speech in the fourth act of *The Tempest*: 'There is not only disgrace and dishonour in that, . . . but an infinite loss.'

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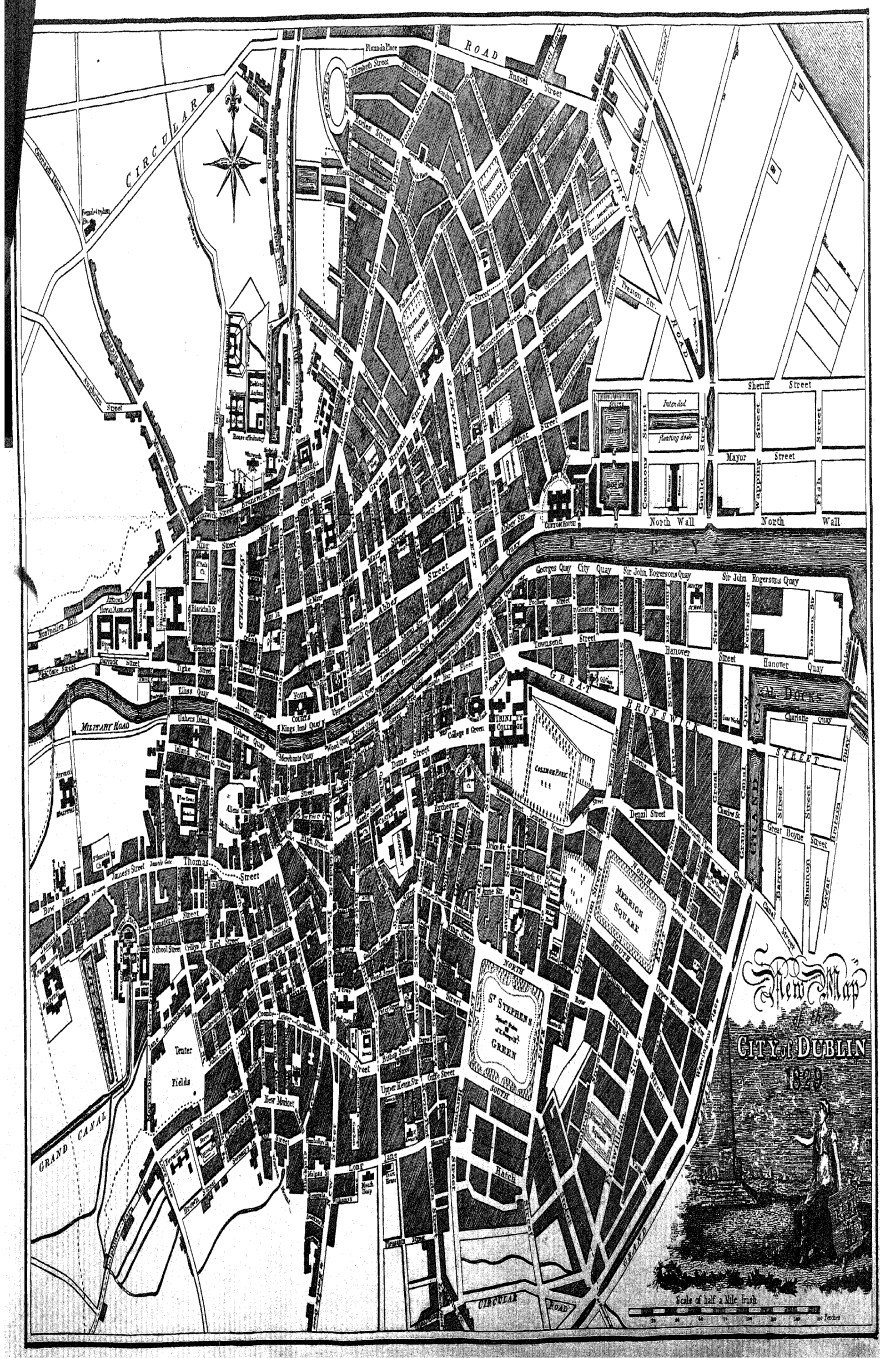
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